NATION

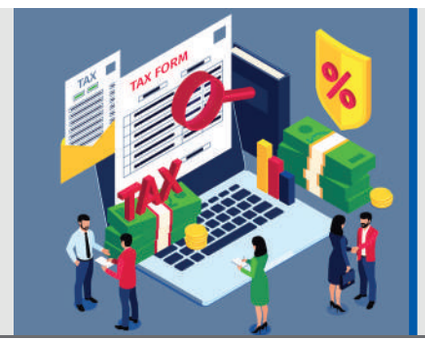
Flooded Delhi relief camps give little relief

≫ Page: 4 ≪

BUSINESS

Govt to lose ₹3.7K cr due to GST cut: SBI

≫ Page: 7 ≪



SPORTS

India thrash Thailand 11-0 in women's Asia Cup hockey

≫ Page: 8 ≪

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SALAR

DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

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CM's car found with 7 traffic violations

BENGALURU, 5 SEPT

Just as traffic awareness campaigns intensify across the City, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's official vehicle (KA05GA2023) has landed in the spotlight for traffic violation. The car has racked up seven various traffic violations, including speeding and seatbelt offenses, sparking a wave of online criticism. Social media is abuzz with screenshots and photos of the CM's vehicle, with users cheekily urging him to make use of the ongoing "50 per cent traffic fine discount". One viral post said, "Offer is on, Sir! Avail now!" Among the violations registered are over speeding, driving without a seatbelt along with various others. *—Salar News*

>>>>More on Page 2

Vedanta beats Adani Group, buys JAL for Rs 17,000 cr

NEW DELHI, 5 SEPT

Mining conglomerate Vedanta on Friday beat Gautam Adani's Group to make a winning bid for the acquisition of debt-ridden Jaiprakash Associates (JAL) for Rs 17,000 crore. The bid value translates into Jaiprakash Associates' net present value of Rs 12,505 crore. JAL, which has interests in real estate, cement, power, hotels and roads, has been dragged into insolvency proceedings after it defaulted on payment of loans. Multiple bidders participated, but in the end, firm bids were placed by only two entities, Adani and Vedanta Group. Vedanta eventually made a winning bid of Rs 17,000 crore, which translated into a NPV (net present value) of Rs 12,505 crore.*—PTI*

Google hit with $3.5 billion fine from EU

LONDON, 5 SEPT

European Union regulators on Friday hit Google with a 2.95 billion euro ($3.5 billion) fine for breaching the bloc's competition rules by favouring its own digital advertising services, marking the fourth such antitrust penalty for the company as well as a retreat from previous threats to break up the tech giant. The European Commission, the 27-nation bloc's executive branch and top antitrust enforcer, also ordered the US tech giant to end its "self-preferencing practices" and take steps to stop "conflicts of interest" along the advertising technology supply chain. The decision was long overdue, coming more than two years after the European Commission announced antitrust charges against Google. Google, however, said the decision was "wrong" and that it would appeal. *—PTI*

Lost India, Russia to darkest China: Don

MEA says it's still open to trade negotiations

WASHINGTON/ NEW DELHI, 5 SEPT

It looks like the US has lost India and Russia to "darkest" China, President Donald Trump said on Friday in his latest remarks as ties between New Delhi and Washington continue to reel under possibly the worst phase in over two decades.

Trump's latest post on social media came days after the bonhomie among Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit in the Chinese city of Tianjin.

A video of Modi and Putin holding hands and walking towards Xi, and then all three forming a close circle as good friends had gone viral on social media.

"Looks like we have lost India and Russia to deepest, darkest China. May they have a long and prosperous future together!" Trump said on Truth Social.

India declined to respond to Trump's comments during External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal's press briefing on Friday.

INDIA RESPONDS TO NAVARO

India rejected White House Trade Advisor Peter Navarro's claim that Brahmin's were profiting from Russia's war on Ukraine as "inaccurate and misleading".

Last week, Navarro accused India of being an "oil money laundromat for the Kremlin" and described it as "strategic freeloading" New Delhi continuing to buy Russian weapons while urging American defence firms to transfer sensitive military technologies and set up manufacturing plants in India.

"We have seen the inaccurate and misleading statements made by Navarro, and obviously reject them," Jaiswal said.

Jaiswal said India and the US are engaged on issues relating to trade, "The relationship between the United States and India is very important for us. Both our countries share a comprehensive global strategic partnership, which is anchored in our shared interests, democratic values and robust people-to-people ties," he said. *—PTI*

Trump posted the image of Russian President Vladimir Putin, Chinese Premier Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the recent SCO summit in China *PHOTO: TRUTHSOCIAL*

- Trump did not elaborate on what he meant by the comments. He had imposed 50% tariffs on India, but maintained he was good friends with Putin and Xi

Cabinet drops 60 cases; 11 against DKS' backers

BENGALURU, 5 SEPT

The Karnataka Cabinet has withdrawn 60 cases booked for the 2019 stone-pelting incident in Chittapur. Many of the accused were supporters of Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar, official sources said.

The government on Thursday decided to withdraw 60 cases at various police stations in the State that are linked to farmers, students and Kannada activists among others, Law and Parliament Affairs Minister HK Patil had said after the Cabinet meeting. The minister, however, did not share further details of the cases.

The cases the cabinet decides to withdraw include 2019 Chittapur stone pelting case and the cases booked against the alleged supporters of Shivakumar, then an MLA, for allegedly pelting stones on buses and government offices in Kanakapura, following his arrest by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in 2019.

The Chittapur incident allegedly happened after police seized cattle heads that were being transported, based on a tip-off from Hindu activists.

Cases against supporters of Shivakumar's brother and former Bangalore Rural MP DK Suresh, who had gheraoed then-Chief Minister in 2012, in protest against the exclusion of their leader (who was then MP) from an event to garland Dr BR Ambedkar's statue, were also withdrawn.

The cases withdrawn also include those against various groups and individuals, including pro-farmer, pro-Dalit, pro-Kannada organisations, political party workers, and those booked in connection with Ganesha procession-related skirmishes at various places. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 2

> When I was arrested by ED, some cases were booked against our workers purposely by the BJP.... (Yet) we have withdrawn cases against BJP and (farmers organisations) and activists
>
> -DK Shivakumar, Deputy Chief Minister

Woman abducted from Patna railway station, gangraped

PATNA, 5 SEPT

A 22-year-old woman was reportedly raped after being abducted at gunpoint by two men from a railway station in the Fatuha area of Patna, police confirmed on Friday.

Awadesh Kumar, Sub-Divisional Police Officer (SDPO) of Fatuha-1, stated, "The woman, in her statement, told police that she was standing at Fatuha railway station to catch a train on Tuesday. The accused forcibly took her away at gunpoint to a deserted place nearby and raped her. She did not know the duo."

He further noted, "One of the accused was wanted by police in eight other criminal cases. Both of them were produced before a local court, which remanded them to judicial custody."

Kumar added that further investigation is currently underway. *—PTI*

PHOTO: FREEPIK

14 terrorists, 400kg RDX: Mumbai on edge

Police personnel on high alert during the idol immersions for Ganesha Chaturthi, at Girgaon Chowpatty, in Mumbai, Friday *PHOTO: PTI*

MUMBAI, 5 SEPT

The Mumbai police are on high alert after receiving a threat message claiming that 14 terrorists had entered the city with 400 kg of RDX and planted them in vehicles, an official said on Friday.

The sender claimed that 14 terrorists had entered the city and planted 400kg of RDX in 34 vehicles for blasts, which will "shake the country", an official said.

The sender mentioned the name of an organisation called 'Lashkar-e-Jihadi' in the threat message to traffic police control room on Thursday on their WhatsApp helpline.

This came as police made security arrangements for Anant Chaturthi, the 10th day of the Ganesh festival

More than 21,000 police personnel were reportedly deployed to maintain law and order during idol immersions on Anant Chaturdashi.

He said that the Crime Branch has launched an investigation into the threat, and the Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) and other agencies have also been informed.

The police have also appealed to Mumbaikars not to believe in rumours and report any suspicious activity. *—PTI*

- Officials believed that the case was prima facie a hoax, but security was beefed across the city. The call claimed that 34 cars were ready to explode

Illegal mining caused Punjab floods that killed 43: Agri minister

NEW DELHI, 5 SEPT

Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan on Friday attributed the record floods in Punjab to illegal mining. He said this has led to weak embankments along rivers and added that the Central government will make a "short-term, medium-term, and long-term" plan to help the state out of this crisis.

He said he will submit a detailed report on the flood to the Prime Minister. On X, he attributed the flooding partly to weakened embankments along the Sutlej, Beas, Ravi and Ghaggar rivers.

The Punjab government has declared all 23 districts flood-hit. About 1,48,590 hectares of agricultural land have been submerged, with over 1,400 villages flooded and more than 3.5 lakh people affected. Forty-three people died. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 4

Commuters wade through a flooded Talwandi Rai Dadu village in Punjab's Amritsar district on Friday *PHOTO: PTI*

CM: GST REVISION COULD COST STATE RS 20,000 CR ANNUALLY

BENGALURU, 5 SEPT

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Friday welcomed the GST Council's decision to rationalise GST rates but said the State could lose Rs 15,000-20,000 crore in revenue due to the move. He urged the Centre to devolve the compensation cess, still being collected on certain sin goods, back to the states.

He also stressed that the union government and the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) must ensure that the benefits of GST rationalisation reach consumers.

"From the very beginning, we had warned that this 'Gabbar Singh Tax' would crush small businesses, increase compliance costs, and burden ordinary families. Sadly, Prime Minister Narendra Modi chose to ignore these warnings for eight long years," Siddaramaiah said in a statement.

Explaining the GST voting structure, Siddaramaiah noted that the union government holds one-third of the total voting power while all states together share the remaining two-thirds, meaning a three-fourths majority is required for any reform.

"This means that even if all states agree, a stubborn central government can block reforms," he claimed.

Highlighting that Karnataka alone could lose Rs 15,000-20,000 crore in revenue due to the decision, the CM said, "We strongly urge the Union Government to devolve the GST compensation cess, still being collected on certain sin goods, back to the States."

Siddaramaiah reiterated that the reduction in rates must lower prices for consumers, not increase profit margins for large corporates. *—PTI*

HIGHEST CAUSE

Cardiovascular diseases kill 1/3rd of all Indians

NEW DELHI, 5 SEPT

Cardiovascular diseases remain the leading cause of mortality in India, causing nearly 31 per cent of deaths, according to the latest data presented by the Sample Registration Survey under the Registrar General of India.

The Report on Causes of Death: 2021-2023, which was released on Wednesday, has said that non-communicable diseases are the leading causes of death in the country, constituting 56.7 per cent of all deaths.

"Communicable, maternal, perinatal and nutritional conditions constitute another 23.4 per cent of deaths. In the 2020-2022 (affected by COVID) period, the corresponding values were 55.7 per cent and 24.0 per cent, respectively."

The report said that overall cardiovascular disease remained the leading cause of death, claiming nearly 31 per cent of lives, followed by respiratory infections at 9.3 per cent, malignant and other neoplasms at 6.4 per cent, and respiratory diseases at 5.7 per cent.

The cardiovascular diseases, a lifestyle phenomenon, are the leading cause in the 30-plus age group, while intentional injuries-suicide is the most common cause of death in the 15-29 age group.

Among other causes of death flagged by the report are digestive diseases, 5.3 per cent, fever of unknown origin, 4.9 per cent, unintentional injuries: other than motor vehicle accidents, 3.7 per cent, diabetes mellitus, 3.5 per cent, and genitourinary diseases, 3.0 per cent.

"Injuries constitute 9.4 per cent of deaths and ill-defined causes constitute 10.5 per cent of deaths. However, the majority of ill-defined causes are at older ages (70 or higher years)," it said.

The report is based on direct sources, provides causes of death cross-classified by age, sex, residence, and major zones across the country. *—PTI*

PHOTO: FREEPIK

Boy killed as brother fires air gun by accident

SIRSI, 5 SEPT

A nine-year-old boy was killed when his younger brother accidentally fired an air gun at him in Somanahalli village of Shirasi taluk, Uttara Kannada district, on Friday. Police said the victim, Kariyappa, was playing in the yard with his siblings when his seven-year-old brother, Diliyappa, pulled the trigger of a loaded air gun slung on the shoulder of Nitin, a farmhand. The bullet struck Kariyappa's chest from close range, killing him instantly. The children's family, Basappa Ondiyar's, had been living on the premises of Raghavendra Hegde's house where Basappa worked. Uttara Kannada Additional SP Jagadish and DySP Geeta Patil visited the spot. Shirasi rural police have registered a case. *—Salar News*

Activist Vasanth Giliyar booked for hate speech

MYSURU, 5 SEPT

Mysuru is facing fresh controversy as Stanley, Director of the Odnadi Service Organisation, has filed a police complaint against activist Vasanth Giliyar. The FIR, lodged at Vijayanagar Police Station, accuses Giliyar of spreading false charges that endanger Stanley's life and provoke religious sentiments, invoking sections 196(1)(A) and 353(2) of Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS), 2023. "Giliyar repeatedly spreads lies and distorts my statements online," Stanley stated, asserting his intention for Giliyar to "learn a lesson" to curb incitement of communal hatred. He claims Giliyar's actions have fostered hostility in society and jeopardised his personal security. Police have commenced investigations into the allegations, reigniting tensions surrounding online hate. *—Salar News*

City hosts mela showcasing SC/OBC artists

BENGALURU, 5 SEPT

Shilp Samagam Mela 2025 opened on Friday at Freedom Park, Bengaluru, and will run until 14 September. Union Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment Ramdas Athawale said the Ministry has organised 11 such fairs since 2022, benefiting 825 artisans from Scheduled Castes, Other Backward Classes and Safai Karamcharis. The mela provides a marketing platform for products supported by the National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation (NSFDC), the National Safai Karamcharis Finance and Development Corporation (NSKFDC) and the National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation (NBCFDC). Of 100 stalls, up to 80 are allotted to beneficiaries. Bengaluru is the second host City this year after Bhubaneswar. *—PTI*

Cong, BJP spar over paper ballot for local body polls

CM says it's based on experience, Vijayendra calls it 'vote theft'

BENGALURU, 5 SEPT

Chief Minister **Siddaramaiah** on Friday defended the decision on going back to ballot paper for local body polls, saying that it was made "based on experience", while the BJP claimed that the Congress was "self-certifying" its own vote theft.

The Congress government on Thursday had decided to recommend to the State Election Commission (SEC) to hold all the future panchayat and urban local body polls in Karnataka using ballot paper instead of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs). Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister HK Patil had cited erosion of confidence and credibility, among people towards EVMs.

"Based on our experience, we have decided that the ballot paper should be there. There are examples where several countries have returned to ballot paper from EVMs," Siddaramaiah told press in City on Friday.

The Cabinet has also decided to authorise the State Election Commission to "prepare, revise and, if necessary, redo" the electoral rolls for local body polls, citing discrepancies in electoral rolls and allegations of "vote theft", which were recently made by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi.

The Opposition BJP claimed the decision amounted to 'self-certifying' that the ruling party came to power through 'vote theft' **PHOTO: X**

However, the Opposition BJP claimed the decision amounted to "self-certifying" that the ruling party came to power through "vote theft."

BJP State President **BY Vijayendra** said that the Congress under Rahul supports ballot-based elections only because "electoral irregularities, booth violence and fraudulent voting can be committed without hesitation" through ballot papers.

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar hit back, saying, "Why is the BJP worried? The government can hold local body polls, there are provisions in law, which was enacted during their (BJP) tenure, saying that either ballot or EVM (can be used)..... Why you (BJP) horrified?"

Comparing BJP's opposition to "thief's mind is a mess", the Deputy CM said, "We have investigated what happened during the parliament election."

Noting that this decision of the State government regarding ballot paper is for local body polls, he said, the Central Election Commission will decide for Assembly and Parliament polls.

Meanwhile, AICC Secretary-in-charge of Karnataka Randeep Singh Surjewala said that the State's decision was a bold step towards restoring democracy and voter confidence in the system. He said the move came from the party's High Command.

He also lauded the decision to prepare a separate voter's list, saying they would become more "transparent".

"Until now, the voter list prepared by Election Commission of India was used for local body elections," he said.

He added that it would allow the State government to regularly update the rolls for Gram Panchayat, Taluk Panchayats, municipal councils, or corporations, something which the Central body wouldn't be able to do.

—Salar News with Agencies

60 CASES WITHDRAWN

Govt dropped cases against Cong, BJP: DKS defends move

BENGALURU, 5 SEPT

Deputy Chief Minister **DK Shivakumar** on Friday defended State government's decision to withdraw several criminal cases, including those registered against his supporters for stone-pelting following his arrest by Enforcement Directorate in 2019.

He said the government has withdrawn cases involving members of the BJP, Congress, activists and various organisations.

The Cabinet, on Thursday, approved the withdrawal of 60 cases registered at various police stations in the State.

Among the cases withdrawn are those related to a 2019 stone-pelting incident in Chittapur, and against alleged supporters of Shivakumar, linked to protests following his arrest by ED.

"There are several cases withdrawn, we have withdrawn cases against BJP people, Congress people. When I was arrested by ED, some cases were booked against our workers purposely by the BJP. Earlier, during Covid, the then BJP government had booked cases against me and now Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and several of our leaders who are now Ministers. Should we sit quietly?" Shivakumar asked.

"This is not the only case, our government has withdrawn hundreds of cases. Cases against people belonging to all parties. We have withdrawn cases on BJP's request too, even against Raita Sangha (farmers organisation or body) and activists," he said.

Noting that ED case in which he was arrested was later dismissed by the courts, the Deputy CM said, "Those who spoke against me when I was arrested and about the welcome I got, when I came out (on bail), why didn't they speak when the case was dismissed? Why now?"

Based on representations received from various public representatives and the public for withdrawal of criminal cases, the requests are considered by Home Department and placed before Cabinet. *—PTI*

CM's car found with 7 traffic violations

BENGALURU, 5 SEPT

Just as traffic awareness campaigns intensify across the City, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's official vehicle (KA05GA2023) has landed in the spotlight for traffic violation.

The car has racked up seven various traffic violations, including speeding and seatbelt offenses, sparking a wave of online criticism.

Social media is abuzz with screenshots and photos of the CM's vehicle, with users cheekily urging him to make use of the ongoing "50 per cent traffic fine discount".

One viral post said, "Offer is on, Sir! Avail now!"

This revelation has not only embarrassed the State's top office but also reignited public discussions on accountability and equal enforcement of traffic laws.

PHOTO: PTI

Additionally, social media posts stating that the CM set an example are flooding social media platforms like X, Instagram, and Facebook.

Moreover, memes with captions like "No one is above the law — not even the CM's car" are circulating.

Adding to the buzz, the City traffic police have announced a 50 per cent fine waiver scheme, active from 23 August to 12 September, 2025. *—Salar News*

Shivakumar aims to build India's first AI City

BENGALURU, 5 SEPT

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar said that the government, through the Greater Bengaluru Comprehensive Suburb Project, aims to build the country's first AI city.

He continued his push for the Greater Bengaluru Integrated Township (GBIT) land acquisition, which has been greeted with stiff opposition from protesting farmers.

He said that the GBIT will convert 2,000 acres of land into a dedicated hub for AI and tech companies with 950 accres of green buffers, lakes and parks. He claimed that it would benefit farmers and locals, saying that "lakhs of jobs" will be created with a "locals-first employment policy,"

"GBIT is not just a township - it's the future of Bengaluru," he wrote on X.

This comes after the State Cabinet on Thursday approved the Metro Elevated Corridor, and consented to the construction of a 37.121 km long double-decker. However, the land acquisition project has not been welcomed by farmers, despite Shivakumar saying that project would "provide necessary assistance" to them.

"They are my people. They are our farmers," he told press on Friday. "I have the right to talk to them. I also know which party some of the farmers belonged to."

He claimed that 82 per cent of the farmers consented to the land acquisition. *—Salar News*

EID-MILAD

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah takes part in Eid Milad celebrations at the International Milad Un Nabi Conference at Palace Grounds in Bengaluru, on Friday; Muslims celebrate 1,500th year of Eid-Milad in the City **PHOTO: MOHAMMAD ASAD**

Bidar to launch social, education survey from 22 Sept

BIDAR, 5 SEPT

Deputy Commissioner Shilpa Sharma announced that a comprehensive social and educational survey of all communities and castes will be conducted across Bidar district from 22 September to 7 October.

She was speaking on Friday while presiding over the district-level coordination committee meeting on the social and educational status survey, held at DC's office auditorium. She said the survey will cover all sections of society.

Government teachers and other department staff will be appointed as enumerators and supervisors, and the details of enumerators must be uploaded on the survey portal.

In Bidar district, 90 master trainers, 450 supervisors, and 4,400 enumerators will take part in the survey. DC directed officials to ensure a complete and accurate enumeration of 3.40 lakh households.

She said, Energy Department has already begun attaching stickers with UHID details on houses, and that geo-tagging has also begun. *—Salar News*

PAKISTAN SAYS INDIA SHARED INFO ON FLOODS

ISLAMABAD, 5 SEPT

Pakistan on Friday said India shared information about the recent floods through the diplomatic channel while complaining that the inputs were not as detailed as in previous instances.

Addressing the weekly press conference here, Foreign Office spokesperson Shafqat Ali Khan also urged India to fully adhere to the Indus Water Treaty (IWT).

A day after the Pahalgam terror attack on 22 April, India took a series of punitive measures against Pakistan that included putting the Indus Waters Treaty of 1960 in "abeyance".

"The Indian side has indeed shared some information about the floods in different rivers through diplomatic channels. However, it is not as detailed as it was in the past," Khan said.

He said the established channel of the Indus Water Commissioner has not been used to share the information.

Usually, such inputs are shared through the Indus Water Commissioner.

The IWT, brokered by the World Bank, has governed the distribution and use of the Indus River and its tributaries between India and Pakistan since 1960.

The spokesperson also said that Pakistan was serious about joining the BRICS grouping, and it was being supported by Russia. *—PTI*

SEEKING JUSTICE

Women write to Sonia, demand focus on D'sthala victims

BENGALURU, 5 SEPT

A group of women personalities from diverse fields, including actor-theatre activist Arundhati Nag, filmmakers Kavita Lankesh and Suman Kittur, writer-journalist Vijayamma, gender and sexuality rights activist Akkai Padmashali, have written to senior Congress leader **Sonia Gandhi** urging her to ensure that the inquiry into a series of unsolved crimes in Dharmasthala must focus exclusively on delivering justice to women and other victims.

Called "Kondavaru Yaaru? Who Killed the Women in Dharmasthala?", the campaign by the group of women seeks to bring the focus back to the issue of justice for the victims and dismantling deep-seated structures that perpetuate such violence against women.

Akkai Padmashali, Kavita Lankesh, Suman Kittur **PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA**

"Unfortunately, not even a few weeks into the investigation, the matter has become the subject of intense and often salacious media coverage and political grandstanding. As a result, what should have been a moment for truth and accountability has instead spiralled into intimidatory tactics and attempts to bury justice once again," read the letter signed by nearly 50 women personalities.

The letter pointed out that the reports in the media have been consistently hinting at possible "systematic abuse, murder, rape, and unexplained deaths involving women and students".

Local activists and journalists in Dakshina Kannada and women's rights organisations across the State have also been raising concerns and protesting about the deaths and unnatural disappearances for years now, in particular Soujanya case in 2012, Padmalatha case in 1986 and Vedavalli case in 1979, the letter stated. According to group of women, Right to Information data between January 2001 and October 2012 shows 424 documented deaths including that of many girls and women in just the two towns of Ujire and Dharmasthala.

The Expert Committee headed by former MP VS Ugrappa, , set up to report on atrocities, violence and sexual crimes against women and children, released its report in 2018, said the letter. *—PTI*

SIT unearths links to D'sthala skull conspiracy

MANGALURU/ BENGALURU, 5 SEPT

The Special Investigation Team (SIT) intensified the probe into the infamous Dharmasthala skull conspiracy and has unearthed startling links stretching from masked YouTubers to local influencers, with allegations of a planned smear campaign against Dharmasthala.

The SIT found that YouTuber Abhishek, who ran the "United Media" channel, was at centre of propaganda drive. During his questioning, investigators discovered connections with other players, including Kerala-based YouTuber Manaf.

Manaf, a truck owner from Kerala, who lost his driver Arjun in the July 2024 Shiruru landslide in Uttara Kannada.

On 11 July, Manaf uploaded the original video showing a skull being lifted from a forest patch near Bungalow Hill.

PHOTO: PTI

Mysuru-based YouTuber Sumanth has alleged that Manaf and Abhishek offered him money to create anti-Dharmasthala content.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah downplayed calls for National Investigation Agency probe into allegations of multiple murders, rapes and burials in Dharmasthala, saying the case is already being investigated by the State police through a SIT.

—Salar News with Agencies

Assam govt staff get spl leave to be with parents

GUWAHATI, 5 SEPT

The Assam government has granted two days of "special casual leave" in November for state employees to spend time with their parents and parents-in-law. An official notification said the leave, under the 'Matri Pitri Vandana' scheme, may be taken on 14 and 15 November, 2025 by applying through a dedicated portal in accordance with the guidelines.Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma announced the initiative in his first Independence Day speech after assuming office in 2021. The notification stated that the Governor of Assam had approved the leave for 14 November (Friday) and 15 November (Saturday). It added that employees could combine these with Sunday, 16 November, to extend their time with their families. *—PTI*

UP minister gets legal notice over 'goonda' remarks

LUCKNOW, 5 SEPT

ABVP member Adarsh Tiwari has issued a legal notice to Uttar Pradesh minister and Suheldev Bhartiya Samaj Party chief Om Prakash Rajbhar over alleged defamatory remarks. The notice says Rajbhar called ABVP activists "goons" and criticised their protests, insulting lakhs of students linked to the RSS-affiliated body. It follows a clash at Shri Ramswaroop Memorial University in Barabanki, where students protested an allegedly unrecognised law course. ABVP workers later demonstrated outside Rajbhar's Lucknow residence, accusing him of supporting police action. The Higher Education Commission ordered an inquiry and lodged an FIR against the university. The notice demands a public apology.*—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Jarange accuses Bhujbal of blocking OBC leaders' rise

C'SAMBHAJINAGAR, 5 SEPT

Maratha activist Manoj Jarange on Friday said the community, though eligible for reservation since 1881, now needs quotas to secure its future generations. Speaking from a Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar hospital after ending a five-day hunger strike in Mumbai, he accused Maharashtra minister and OBC leader Chhagan Bhujbal of blocking the rise of others in his group. Jarange ended his fast after the state announced a committee to issue Kunbi caste certificates to Marathas with historic proof of their Kunbi heritage, an OBC category. A government resolution invoking the Hyderabad gazetteer was issued to support the move. He said the GR would survive legal challenge and cases against Maratha protesters would be withdrawn. *—PTI*

Punjab CM Mann hospitalised due to exhaustion

CHANDIGARH, 5 SEPT

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann was admitted to Fortis Hospital in Mohali on Friday evening after reporting symptoms of exhaustion and a low heart rate. The 51-year-old leader's condition raised concerns, prompting medical attention. A statement from the hospital confirmed, "On arrival, his vitals were assessed and have since been stabilised." The incident highlights the demanding nature of Mann's role, and officials have reassured the public about his recovery. As of now, no further details regarding his treatment or expected discharge have been provided, but there is hope for a swift recovery. The Chief Minister's hospitalisation sparked discussions on the pressures faced by political leaders.*—PTI*

Ajit Pawar threatens IPS officer, then denies it

NCP says Pawar spoke in his normal tone, didn't threaten

MUMBAI, 5 SEPT

A day after a video showed him rebuking a woman IPS officer over the phone, asking her to stop action against illegal soil excavation, Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar on Friday said he did not want to interfere, but was trying to deescalate a tense situation.

As the NCP chief came under fire over the incident, police registered a case against several persons for allegedly obstructing IPS officer Anjana Krishna and other officials from initiating action against illegal `murum' soil excavation in Solapur district.

"Let me state clearly that my intention was not to interfere with law enforcement but to ensure that the situation on the ground remained calm and did not escalate further," Pawar said.

He values the rule of law and has the highest respect for the police force, including women officers who serve with distinction and courage, he said.

"I remain firmly committed to transparent governance and ensuring that every illegal activity, including sand mining, is dealt with strictly," he said.

Ajit Pawar admonished the woman IPS officer and stopped her from taking action against illegal soil excavation *PHOTO: SCREENGRAB/PTI*

The video, aired by Marathi news channels, showed Krishna talking to Pawar on a local NCP worker's phone. She did not recognise his voice at first.

The incident had occurred on 31 August when revenue department officials along with Krishna reached Kapre Wasti to take action against illegal excavation.

The accused allegedly tried to obstruct the action.

NCP leader Sunil Tatkare and revenue minister Chandrashekhar Bawankule, defended Pawar, saying he spoke in his "normal tone

Meanwhile, Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut accused Pawar of protecting "thieves", and said he has no right to remain in the government.

He said the Deputy CM is asking an IPS officer to back illegal activities but preaches about following law to others.

"Illegal excavation of 'murrum' soil means causing loss to the exchequer.. Earlier, many (leaders) had to resign on moral grounds because of such instances," he said.

"You are robbing the entire state. Ministers should be ashamed," Raut alleged.

—PTI

Cong comparing Biharis with 'bidis' an insult: BJP

NEW DELHI, 5 SEPT

The BJP on Friday slammed the Congress for "comparing" people of Bihar with 'bidis', calling it an "insult to all Biharis", and asked the Opposition to be ready to face its political consequences.

The party said the NDA will make it a "very big issue" in the upcoming assembly polls in the state.

The Congress on Friday issued an apology over its Kerala unit's controversial tweet drawing a parallel between Bihar and bidis, to mock the BJP over recent GST reforms.

This Congress' Kerala unit in a now-deleted post on X said, "Bidis and Bihar starts with B. Cannot be considered a sin anymore."

Senior BJP leader Ravi Shankar Prasad said people of Bihar will give a reply to "this insult of Biharis" in the upcoming assembly polls.

Prasad said RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav, did not have "courage" to condemn such an insult of Biharis. *—PTI*

Item	Current GST Rate	Proposed GST
Cigars and cigarettes	28%	40%
Bidis	28%	18%
Tobacco	28%	40%

BHUTAN PM VISITS RAM TEMPLE

Bhutan Prime Minister Dasho Tshering Tobgay arrived in Ayodhya on Friday morning on a four-hour visit, during which he offered prayers at the Ram temple and other shrines. Uttar Pradesh Minister Surya Pratap Shahi, Ayodhya Mayor Girish Pati Tripathi and MLA Ved Prakash Gupta received him at the airport *PHOTO: PTI*

Ukraine conflict affects Global South: India

UNITED NATIONS, 5 SEPT

India has voiced regret over the Ukraine conflict's "collateral consequences", including prices of fuel, saying countries of the Global South have been left to fend for themselves, as Delhi underscored that diplomatic efforts hold the promise to end the war and bring lasting peace.

"We maintain that the loss of innocent lives is unacceptable, and no solution can be found on the battlefield," India's Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Parvathaneni Harish said.

Addressing the UN General Assembly debate on 'The situation in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine', Harish said Delhi endorsed last month's summit meeting in Alaska between US President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin.

India also welcomed the diplomatic efforts by the US president in engaging with Ukrainian president and European leaders in Washington.Prime Minister Narendra Modi remains in touch with Putin, Zelensky and the European leadership on the evolving situation. He spoke with European Council President António Costa and von der Leyen. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar discussed bilateral ties and Ukraine conflict with the nation's Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha *—PTI*

Centre must have law to implement Article 15(5):Cong

NEW DELHI, 5 SEPT

The Congress on Friday demanded that the government must introduce a law for implementing Article 15(5), which pertains to reservation for SCs, STs and OBCs in private educational institutions, in Parliament's next session.

To buttress its argument, the Opposition party cited a parliamentary committee report which stated that the SC, ST, and OBC community students are underrepresented in private universities.

Addressing a joint press conference along with Adivasi Congress chief Vikrant Bhuria and party's OBC department head Anil Jaihind, Congress' SC Department Chief Rajendra Pal Gautam said the number of private educational institutions in the country has been continuously increasing, but due to the non-implementation of reservations there and lack of money, children from SC, ST, OBC categories could not get access to them.

Last year, a committee of Parliament held discussions with different institutions, after which it was found that in private educational institutions, only 0.89% students from Scheduled Castes, 0.53% students from Scheduled Tribes, and 11.16% students from OBC are there, he said. *–PTI*

Telangana BJP moves SC to sue CM for defamation

NEW DELHI, 5 SEPT

The Telangana unit of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has sought intervention from the Supreme Court to contest a High Court decision that quashed a defamation case against Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy. The hearing is scheduled for 8 September before Chief Justice BR Gavai and Justices K Vinod Chandran and Atul S Chandurkar.

The Telangana High Court had previously ruled on 1 August in favour of Reddy, who sought to dismiss the ongoing case in a Hyderabad trial court. The BJP's complaint, lodged in May 2024, accused Reddy of delivering a defamatory and provocative speech in May 2023, alleging that he had collaborated with the Telangana Congress Party to spread a fraudulent narrative suggesting that the BJP would abolish reservations if elected.

The party claimed that Reddy's statements diminished its reputation. In response, a trial court had determined that there was a prima facie case against Reddy under the Indian Penal Code and Section 125 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, which addresses incitement of enmity during elections.Reddy argued that political speeches should not be subjected to scrutny. *—PTI*

BJP claims Foreigners Act vital, Oppn dubs it 'self-contradictory'

KOLKATA, 5 SEPT

BJP has maintained that the Centre's recent order to grant residential status to non-Muslim with invalid travel documents from neighbouring countries couldn't have been "better timed", even as Opposition perceived it to be a strategy to prevent the party's apple cart from getting upset in poll-bound states of the east.

Interpretations of the order across the political spectrum ranged from being "the first step towards granting citizenship to persecuted Hindus who crossed over from Bangladesh in recent times" to "a recipe for a civil war among communities".

As per the order, people belonging to minority communities in Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan who sought shelter in India on grounds of religious persecution on or before 31 December, 2024 without valid travel documents, would not be prosecuted under the Immigration and Foreigners Act, 2025.

Mohit Roy, former convenor of BJP's refugee cell, said that BJP had been demanding extension of entry deadline in the wake of a rapidly altered Bangladesh, where persecution of minorities has allegedly increased manifold in recent times.

- CPI(M) politburo member Md Salim called the move a "knee-jerk reaction" by the BJP generated from its "anxiety of losing support base" among the Namashudra Hindus of Bengal.

CPI(M) politburo member Md Salim called the move a "knee-jerk reaction" by the BJP generated from its "anxiety of losing support base" among the Namashudra Hindus of Bengal. There is considerable disappointment with the BJP over CAA, and very few from have applied for citizenship, he said. *—PTI*

REAL KERALA STORY

Eid-e-Milad celebrants greet Onam rally

BENGALURU, 5 SEPT

The Onam celebrations at Yakkara-Murikkavu in Kerala's Palakkad district saw different communities uniting when a procession led by a Mahabali-clad person was greeted by 'Duff' drums played by students of a Madrassa of the Juma Masjid on Friday.

The students celebrated the 'Nabi Dinam', which coincided with 'Thiruvonam' in the month of Chingam in the Malayalam calendar this year.

Eid-e-Milad or Prophet's Day is the birth anniversary of Prophet Mohammed.

In a display of the real 'Kerala Story,' television channels hailed the occasion.

While the King Mahabali reached Murikkavu, with the 'Chenda' percussion instrument playing in the background, the children from the mosque greeted them, making onlookers cheer at the joyous occasion.

"It was such a delightful sight. I have not experienced such a delight in the last five years," Das Kalasala, who performed the role of Mahabali in the procession said.

A large floral carpet, called Pookalam or Athapookalam, made as part of Onam celebrations on the day of Thiruvonam at Sree Padmanabhaswamy Temple, in Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala *PHOTO: PTI*

Representatives of the Murikkavu Juma Masjid also said it was a great message for the whole world to remain united.

Onam is celebrated by Malayalis across the world as a state festival in memory of a glorious era when the land was ruled by King Mahabali, where people of different caste and creed were treated as equals.

Meanwhile, Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan greeted the people on the Prophet's Day.

"The ideals of equality and friendship are at the heart of the messages of Prophet Muhammad. The memory of the Prophet gives us the energy to lead a happy social life with humanity," he said*—PTI*

Wankhede's sister files petition in defamation case

MUMBAI, 5 SEPT

Yasmeen Wankhede, sister of former NCB zonal director Sameer Wankhede, has accused the police of conducting a biased investigation into her defamation complaint against senior NCP leader Nawab Malik. Wankhede alleged that the probe "appears to have been influenced and, even to some extent, directed" by Malik, following her allegations of false and defamatory statements made by him in tweets and television interviews.

In 2021, a Bandra magistrate court mandated an inquiry, but the police concluded that Malik's statements were part of his duties as a political spokesperson and found no evidence of an offence. Wankhede filed a protest petition claiming the police report "attempts to justify the conduct of the accused person" and highlighted "appropriate actions were not taken" despite clear defamatory claims.

Wankhede's advocate argued that Malik's justification did not permit the misuse of private photographs for personal agendas.

The case is scheduled for a hearing by the court on 22 September. *—PTI*

Sameer Wankhede *PHOTO: ANI*

- In 2021, a Bandra magistrate court mandated an inquiry, but the police concluded that Malik's statements were part of his duties as a political spokesperson and found no evidence of an offence. Wankhede filed a petition claiming the police report tries to justify the conduct.

Flooded Delhi relief camps give little relief

Residents lose their belongings as houses flood; crops damaged & fear of infections exists

Flood-affected people take shelter in makeshift tents near Shastri Park Metro Station in New Delhi on Friday; The Yamuna river flows in spate partially submerging a temple near Yamuna Ghat; Workers try to move a cart loaded with LPG cylinders through the flooded Yamuna Bazar area **PHOTO: PTI**

NEW DELHI, 5 SEPT

As soon as the horn of the food truck blares, children and women rush to collect their meals near flood relief camps in Delhi, where several families displaced by the rising Yamuna are staying.

Strips of cloth tied to ropes stretch across the middle of the camp, serving as makeshift drying lines, while piles of salvaged belongings and plants uprooted by the floods lie scattered in corners.

"We face a lot of trouble here at night because of the mosquitoes. How will the sick here manage to eat only rice?" said Shanti, a resident of Yamuna Khadar.

Ram Kishan, a farmer, was left with no means of livelihood after his crops were destroyed.

A walk through the Mayur Vihar Phase I relief camp showed how people are trying to hold on to whatever they could save.

"Living with a baby under the open sky is very difficult. There is no privacy and we are worried about its health," Poonam, mother of an infant said. Utensils, mattresses and wooden cots were placed along the roadside. Some children played nearby while elderly men sat in groups.

However, the water level in the Yamuna river at Delhi's Old Railway Bridge receded to 207.31 metres at 8 am on Friday, a day after reaching the season's highest at 207.48 metres.

Meanwhile, 55 families were rescued from a flood-affected Badarpur village in Ghaziabad in Uttar Pradesh.

Though relief camps have been set up with arrangements for food and milk for infants, many were reluctant to move to in. The administration is trying to protect the Yamuna embankment to prevent the floodwaters from impacting more villages.

Ambulances, a health department team and essential medicines were stationed in the affected region. Fodder supplies for cattle were dispatched to several villages. *—PTI*

> ● "We face a lot of trouble here at night because of the mosquitoes. How will the sick here manage to eat only rice?" said Shanti, a resident of Yamuna Khadar. "Living with a baby under the open sky is very difficult. There is no privacy and we are worried about its health," Poonam, mother of an infant said.

Flood situation eases in J&K

SRINAGAR, 5 SEPT

The flood situation in most parts of Kashmir eased on Friday as the water levels in the Jhelum and other water bodies went below the danger mark.

In Anantnag, several structures were damaged due to soil erosion in the aftermath of the floods. People were asked to evacuate such houses.

However, educational institutions across Kashmir remained closed for the third day on Friday. Classes will resume from 8 September.

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah directed evacuation of people from inundated villages, round-the-clock monitoring and restoration of essential services in the valley.

The Jammu-Srinagar national highway remained closed for vehicular traffic due to multiple landslides, while other inter-regional roads were reopened.

The pilgrimage to Mata Vaishno Devi cave shrine in Reasi remained suspended for the 11th consecutive day on Friday.

PUNJAB

Meanwhile, the death toll in the devastating floods in Punjab rose to 43 while crops on 1.71 lakh hectares were damaged.

Two central teams will assess the situation and submit a report to the Centre.

RAJASTHAN

In Rajasthan's Ajmer, the embankment of the Boraj pond was damaged, triggering floods that inundated houses across multiple localities. People were evacuated to safer zones.

HIMACHAL PRADESH

About 350 stranded pilgrims of the Manimahesh Yatra were evacuated from Bharmaur to Chamba in Himachal Pradesh by IAF helicopters. *—PTI*

Chinese sailor goes missing from port in Odisha

PARADIP, 5 SEPT

Authorities at Paradip Port in Odisha have mounted an intensive search for a Chinese sailor who fell into the sea on Friday morning, police said. Teams from the Odisha Disaster Rapid Action Force, Central Industrial Security Force, Odisha Marine Police and scuba divers are scouring the waters around the port. Officials said the crew member slipped while setting a ladder as his vessel prepared to depart after unloading at the Paradip International Cargo Terminal. In an attempt to save him, a Bangladeshi sailor jumped into the water but was rescued safely soon afterwards, a police officer added. The search for the missing sailor continues, with port operations reportedly unaffected by the incident. *—PTI*

Fraudsters siphon off Rs 16.43 cr from Tripura civic body

AGARTALA, 5 SEPT

Police have initiated a case against 'unknown fraudsters' for allegedly siphoning off Rs 16.38 crore from the Agartala Municipal Corporation (AMC) bank account using cloned cheques. The case follows a report from UCO Bank's zonal manager, Sanjib Roy, who discovered that the amount had been withdrawn via six cloned cheques in August and early September. Following a complaint from a bank official, the police lodged an FIR. The forgers reportedly forged the signature of AMC's Chief Executive Officer, DK Chakma, while the original cheques remained with the authority. The CCTV footage from the Kaman Chowmuhani branch has been obtained to identify the individuals who submitted the fraudulent cheques. *—PTI*

African Swine Fever breaks out in Arunachal Pradesh

ITANAGAR, 5 SEPT

An outbreak of African Swine Fever (ASF) has been detected in several parts of Arunachal Pradesh's West Siang district, an official confirmed on Thursday. To curb its spread, District Magistrate Liyi Bagra has banned the import of pigs from outside the district and prohibited inter-district transport of pigs and piglets. Butchers and individuals intending to slaughter pigs for human consumption or other purposes must first secure an anti-mortem inspection certificate from a veterinary officer. Only pigs inspected and ear-tagged by the authorities may be slaughtered or sold. The administration warned that anyone breaching these directives will face action under relevant legal provisions, aimed at protecting livestock and preventing further transmission of ASF in the region. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X

Fugitive wanted in Rs 2,300 cr scam deported from UAE

NEW DELHI, 5 SEPT

A fugitive wanted by Gujarat Police for his involvement in a cricket betting scam worth Rs 2,300 crores was deported from the UAE on Friday in an operation coordinated by the CBI with the state police, officials of the Ministry of External Affairs and Ministry of Home Affairs said. Harshit Babulal Jain, who had an Interpol Red Notice against him, was located in the UAE. CBI had received the Red Notice published against Jain through Interpol on 9 August, 2023, on the request of the Gujarat Police. The subject was deported from the UAE and was handed over to the Gujarat Police on at the Ahmedabad International Airport. *—PTI*

161 ONBOARD

AI flight suffers engine fault, pilot makes PAN-PAN call

INDORE, 5 SEPT

A Delhi-Indore Air India Express flight having 161 passengers on board on Friday suffered a mid-air engine fault, with the pilot making a 'PAN-PAN' call to indicate non-life-threatening emergency, but the aircraft landed safely at the airport here with a delay of 20 minutes, an official said.

The aircraft landed at the Devi Ahilyabai Holkar Airport in Indore and everyone on board was safe.

"After receiving information about a technical fault in one of the engines of the Air India Express plane coming from Delhi to Indore, we took all precautions and the aircraft landed at Indore airport at 9.55 am. As per the schedule, it was supposed to land at the Indore airport at 9.35 am," Devi Ahilyabai Holkar Airport Director Vipinkant Seth said.

PHOTO: PTI

The crew of this plane with flight number IX 1028 and all 161 passengers on board are completely safe.

Seth said that the pilot of the plane sent a 'PAN-PAN' signal to the Air Traffic Control (ATC) after which fire and medical arrangements were made at the airport as per the current standard operating procedure. *—PTI*

Lookout notice issued to Shilpa, hubby in fraud case

MUMBAI, 5 SEPT

The Mumbai police have issued a Lookout Circular (LOC) against Bollywood actor Shilpa Shetty and her businessman husband Raj Kundra in connection with a Rs 60 crore cheating case, officials said on Friday.

The LOC was issued by the Economic Offences Wing of the city police as the couple makes frequent international trips. They cannot leave the country without prior permission.

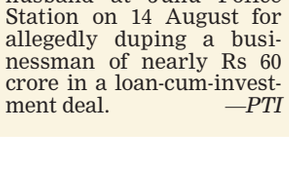


PHOTO: INSTAGRAM

A case was registered against the actor and her husband at Juhu Police Station on 14 August for allegedly duping a businessman of nearly Rs 60 crore in a loan-cum-investment deal. *—PTI*

'Grandma doesn't have right to custody'

MUMBAI, 5 SEPT

The Bombay High Court has directed a woman to return custody of her five-year-old grandson to his biological parents, citing that her emotional bond with the child does not give her a superior right to his custody.

The child was in the care of his paternal grandmother, as his parents had to take care of his twin brother, who is suffering from cerebral palsy.

However, due to a property dispute, the child's father asked his mother, 74, to hand over the custody, to which she refused.

The child's grandmother claimed that she had been taking care of the child since birth and they shared an emotional bond.

The rights of the biological parents over the child can be curtailed only if it was shown that granting them custody would be detrimental to the child's welfare, the court held.

There was no marital discord between the parents and the father was employed, making them capable of taking care of the child. The grandmother was directed to hand over the child's custody within two weeks. *—PTI*

PHOTO: AI

Sibal to move SC for Umar Khalid's bail

Senior advocate and Rajya Sabha MP Kapil Sibal said on Friday he would move the Supreme Court after the Delhi High Court refused bail to activist Umar Khalid in the 2020 Delhi riots case. Calling the decision a violation of Article 21, Sibal argued Khalid has been jailed for nearly five years under UAPA over a speech in Mumbai without direct evidence. Citizens' protest rights are subject to reasonable restrictions. *—PTI*

Govt issues SOP for disabled road accident victims

NEW DELHI, 5 SEPT

The Indian government has proposed draft guidelines aimed at enhancing road safety and support for disabled individuals affected by road accidents. Developed by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD), the plan includes disability-friendly ambulances, priority evacuation for the injured, and trained first responders.

The guidelines emphasise a framework for immediate medical response, rehabilitation, and long-term social integration for persons with disabilities (PwDs) resulting from road accidents. Measures include retrofitted infrastructure, "disability-inclusive zones," and training for emergency responders. *—PTI*

14,000 health staffers quit as Chhattisgarh govt sacks 25

RAIPUR, 5 SEPT

Over 14,000 striking contractual officers and employees of the National Health Mission (NHM) in Chhattisgarh have submitted their resignations after the government sacked 25 NHM staffers leading the agitation.

The NHM staffers have been agitating since 18 August to press for their demands, including regularisation of services and improved working conditions.

Instead of addressing their long-pending demands, the government has chosen to take punitive measures, said an office-bearer of the Chhattisgarh Pradesh NHM Karamchari Sangh.

The executive body of the State Health Committee accepted four of the 10 demands raised by the contractual NHM employees.

> ● The NHM staffers have been agitating since 18 August to press for their demands, including regularisation of services, improved working conditions and reservation in recruitment.

A committee headed by the NHM joint director, was also formed to examine three more demands, while the remaining three demands for regularisation of services, creation of a public health cadre and reservation in recruitment to regular posts will be decided at the highest government level.

Despite repeated notices, when the protesting employees did not resume duty, 25 of them were dismissed from service.

Among those dismissed are Chhattisgarh Pradesh NHM Karamchari Sangh president Dr Amit Kumar Miri, general secretary Kaushlesh Tiwari, and Pranntiya Sanrakshak Hemant Kumar Sinha.

The NHM staffers will continue the strike until their demands were met. They had submitted memoranda 160 times without any response from authorities so far,

The administration does not want the government to establish dialogue with employees or arrive at a solution, they alleged. The executive committee meeting had addressed many of the demands. *—PTI*

FOR NURTURING YOUNG MINDS

Prez honours 45 teachers with National Teacher Awards

NEW DELHI, 5 SEPT

President Droupadi Murmu on Friday gave the National Teacher Awards to 45 teachers from across the country for their exemplary contribution to teaching and learning.

From novel methods of teaching, dedication to students' growth to attempts to enhance learning achievements in difficult environments, the awardees were recognised at the annual award ceremony.

Ranging from innovative pedagogy to inspiring first-generation learners, the awardees played a key role in shaping young minds across India.

Among the awardees is M Devananda Kumar, Faculty of Telugu at Dr Lakireddy Hanimireddy Government Degree College, Mylavaram, Andhra Pradesh, who has received the award for his innovative teaching practices.

"His work includes creating thallapatra granthas (palm-leaf manuscripts), producing educational videos for LMS, and earning prestigious accolades for his contributions to education," his citation read.

Similarly, Proshanto Kr Saha, Faculty of Psychology at Rajiv Gandhi Central University, Arunachal Pradesh, has been recognised for his expertise in forensic psychology and neuropsychology, with more than 14 years of academic service.

"He established a Neuropsychology Lab, developed intervention training modules, led major research projects, and extended psychological support to child abuse victims, reflecting his commitment to both academic excellence and social impact," the citation said.

President Droupadi Murmu presents an award to a teacher in Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi on Friday **PHOTO: PTI**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi also interacted with the teachers. In a light-hearted remark, he said that while teachers usually give homework to students, he wanted to assign one to them—to lead campaigns promoting swadeshi products and strengthen the "Make in India" and "Vocal for Local" movements. *—PTI*

ONAM CELEBRATIONS

Malayali women in Bengaluru celebrate Onam festival at the East Cultural Association in Indiranagar, Bengaluru, on Friday. Women adorned in traditional attire created intricate 'Pookkalam'—beautiful floral arrangements — shared warm greetings and enjoyed some delicious Kerala sadhya

PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD

Shunned pariah Kim turns into a confident diplomat

Kim Jong Un put on a command performance this week at a gathering of some two dozen world leaders in China, striding with confidence and a broad grin across one of the biggest international stages of his 14-year career as North Korea's leader.

As Kim returns home on Friday, his time in Beijing marks a stunning transformation from his first tentative, violent years in power, when some analysts suggested the inexperienced young leader would struggle to survive threats to his rule.

Serious diplomacy with a large group of leaders was unimaginable.

But in Beijing, Kim looked like the leader his propaganda services have constantly sought to portray: an important — crucial, even — player in world affairs, entirely at home with the biggest hitters in Eurasia.

Beginning in 2018, when he and US President Donald Trump held the first of their much-publicised meetings, Kim has emerged as a far different, far more confident leader than when he was thrust into power after his father's death in 2011.

Granted, he is not yet appearing at the United Nations or established Western global forums. And the attendees in Beijing — which didn't include leaders from the US, Western Europe or Japan — showed little interest in pressing him on widespread concerns about human rights violations or his nuclear weapons. But the events this week are a watershed in his use of international diplomacy to advance his largely secluded nation's aims.

He deftly handled his two biggest allies, Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin, laughing with them, pledging enduring assistance to Moscow in its war against Ukraine, and strengthening a sometimes shaky relationship with China. He confidently rubbed shoulders with world leaders at a military parade marking the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II.

Kim Jong Un's time in Beijing marks a stunning transformation from his first tentative, violent years in power. Serious diplomacy with a large group of leaders was unimaginable ***PHOTO: PTI***

He even felt self-assured enough to bring his young daughter, and possible successor.

"He now appears a seasoned realist and political survivor. In addition to human rights violations and nuclear missile development, Kim has added calculated diplomacy to his authoritarian toolkit," said Leif-Eric Easley, a professor of international studies at Ewha Womans University in Seoul.

For decades, the biggest trip, internationally, for a North Korean leader was an occasional armoured train ride to China, where he was somewhat condescendingly feted by his country's only real ally, an economic, diplomatic and military lifeline in a neighbourhood filled with enemies.

Kim is still using the bullet-proof green train, and this latest foreign trip was to Beijing. But the similarities ended there.

It started with three meetings with Donald Trump

Kim and Trump met one-on-one in Singapore in 2018 and then in Vietnam in 2019. They also had talks later on the border between the two Koreas. These were the first summits between a sitting US president and a North Korean leader. The talks failed to stop North Korea's decades-long pursuit of nuclear weapons and the missiles — drawing ambitions that have drawn harsh international sanctions.

There was widespread criticism that Trump had helped transform Kim's image, from pariah to legitimate dialogue partner. Kim's more recent travel also includes two high-profile trips to Russia, in April 2019, for a summit with Putin in the Pacific port city of Vladivostok, and in September 2023 to meet again with the Russian leader at a space facility. It marks a big break with the international diplomacy of his father

Kim Jong Un's grandfather, national founder Kim Il Sung, was more adventurous in his travels, but Kim Jong Un's father, Kim Jong Il, famously avoided plane travel, hence the special armored train.

During his 17 years in power, Kim Jong Il made roughly a dozen trips abroad. Almost all were train trips to China. He was travelling by train when he died in 2011.

Experts believe North Korea's previous rulers largely avoided events with multiple heads of state in attendance because they were conscious of North Korean propaganda portraying them as peerless leaders — and of international condemnation of their nuclear ambitions.

Trips to China, however, were seen as crucial. Like his son, Kim Jong Il knew that he needed to pay his respects to Beijing, which provides the North with everything from fuel to shrimp chips and is North Korea's major link, by air and by rail, to the outside world. Kim has carried out a far larger number of weapons tests than his father and grandfather, persevering in the face of crippling sanctions, apparently convinced that nuclear arms alone guarantee his nation's survival. —PTI

SALAR

Free trade may just have a future elsewhere

The global trading system that promoted free trade and underpinned global prosperity for 80 years now stands at a crossroads.

Recent trade policy developments have introduced unprecedented levels of uncertainty – not least, the upheaval caused by US President Donald Trump's sweeping tariff regime.

This is presenting some fundamental changes to the way nations interact economically and politically.

Free trade envisions the movement of goods and services across borders with minimal restrictions ***PHOTO: FREEPIK***

The free trade ideal

Free trade envisions the movement of goods and services across borders with minimal restrictions. That's in contrast to protectionist policies such as tariffs or import quotas.

However, free trade has never existed in pure form. The rules-based global trading system emerged from ashes of the second world war. It was designed to progressively reduce trade barriers while letting countries maintain national sovereignty.

This began with the 1947 General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, which was signed by 23 countries in Geneva, Switzerland.

Through successive rounds of negotiation, this treaty achieved substantial reductions in tariffs on merchandise goods and laid grounwork for the World Trade Organisation in 1995.

'Plumbing of the trading system'

World Trade Organisation introduced binding mechanisms to settle trade disputes between countries. It also expanded coverage of rules-based trade to services, intellectual property and investment measures.

Colloquially known as "the plumbing of the trading system", this framework enabled global trade to expand dramatically.

Merchandise exports grew from US$10.2 trillion (A$15.6 trillion) in 2005 to more than US$25 trillion (A$38.3 trillion) in 2022.

Yet despite decades of liberalisation, truly free trade remains elusive. Protectionism has persisted, not only through traditional tariffs but also non-tariff measures such as technical standards.

Trump's new trade doctrine

Economist Richard Baldwin has argued the current trade disruption stems from the Trump administration's "grievance doctrine".

This doctrine doesn't view trade as an exchange between countries with mutual benefits. Rather, it sees it as a zero-sum competition, what Trump describes as other nations "ripping off" the US.

Trade deficits – where the total value of a country's imports exceeds the value of its exports – aren't regarded as economic outcomes of the trade system. Instead, they're seen as theft.

The US retreats from leadership

Trump wants to reset a system he says is rigged. Once, the US provided defence, economic and political security, stable currency arrangements, and predictable market access. Now, it increasingly acts as an economic bully.

Trump's policies have challenged core principles of the World Trade Organisation.

Examples include his ignoring the principle of "most-favoured nation", where countries can't make different rules for different trading partners, and "tariff bindings" – which limit global tariff rates.

Some trade policy analysts have even suggested the US might withdraw from the World Trade Organisation. Doing so would complete its formal rejection of the global trading rules-based order.

China's challenge and the US response

China's emergence as the world's manufacturing superpower has fundamentally altered global trade dynamics. China is on track to produce 45% of global industrial output by 2030.

China's manufacturing surpluses are approaching US$1 trillion annually (A$1.5 trillion), aided by big subsidies and market protections.

For the Trump administration, this represents a fundamental clash between US market-capitalism and China's state-capitalism.

How 'middle powers' are responding

Many countries maintain significant relationships with both China and the US. This creates pressure to choose sides.

Australia exemplifies these tensions. It maintains defence and security ties with the US, notably through the AUKUS agreement. But Australia has also built significant economic relationships with China, despite recent disputes. China remains Australia's largest two-way trading partner.

This fragmentation, however, creates opportunities for cooperation between "middle powers". European and Asian countries are increasingly exploring partnerships.

Alternatives won't fix the system

At a summit this week, China, Russia, India and other non-Western members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation backed the multilateral trading system. This represents an attempt to claim global leadership.

The larger "BRICS+" bloc is a grouping of countries that includes Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa and Indonesia. This group has frequently opposed Western-dominated institutions.

However, BRICS+ lacks the institutional depth to function as a genuine alternative to the World Trade Organisation-centred trading system.

Where is the trading system headed?

The global trading system has been instrumental in lifting more than a billion people out of extreme poverty since 1990. But the old system of US-led multilateralism has ended. What replaces it remains unclear.

One possible outcome is that we see a gradual weakening of global institutions like World Trade Organisation, while regional arrangements become more important.

"Coalitions of like-minded nations" could set high policy standards.

These coalitions could focus on freer trade, regulatory harmonisation, or security restrictions depending on their interests. That could help maintain the plumbing in a global trade system.

—The Conversation

LETTERS write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

Are Canada and India doing enough to repair ties?

India has moved to revive diplomatic ties with Canada, deepening trade and strategic links beyond US dependence.

India and Canada have appointed new envoys, marking a substantial step toward normalising their relations following a major diplomatic standoff.

India's Foreign Ministry said it will assign its current envoy to Spain, Dinesh Patnaik, to Canada — while Christopher Cooter will be Canada's new high commissioner to India.

Why did India-Canada relations become strained?

The rift stemmed from former Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's allegations that Indian agents were involved in the assassination of Sikh leader and activist Hardeep Singh Nijjar.

According to media reports, Nijjar was a prominent organiser in the Sikh community in Canada. He was also a proponent of the so-called Khalistan movement, which calls for a Sikh homeland by carving out an ethno-religious state in India's Punjab region.

The movement dates back to India and Pakistan's independence in 1947, when the idea was pushed forward in negotiations preceding the partition of the Punjab region between the two new countries.

India dismissed Trudeau's claims as "absurd" and politically motivated, leading to the expulsions of top envoys.

Roadmap to warmer ties

After a fractious period of several months, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi met with his Canadian counterpart Mark Carney in June during the G7 leaders' summit held in Kananaskis, Canada.

Both agreed to take "calibrated and constructive steps to restore stability in the relationship."

"The appointment of a new high commissioner reflects Canada's step-by-step approach to deepening diplomatic engagement and advancing bilateral cooperation with India," said Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs Anita Anand following the appointment.

Foreign policy experts and diplomats believe that the re-opening of high-level diplomatic dialogue signals hope for pragmatic engagement, paving the way for resumed trade talks and meaningful strategic alignment, especially vital in shifting global trade dynamics and regional security interests.

"When this crisis broke in 2023, and further escalated last year, both countries brought a mixture of outrage, hubris,

The rift stemmed from ex-Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's allegations that Indian agents were involved in the assassination of Sikh leader and activist Hardeep Singh Nijjar ***PHOTO: PTI***

and complacency to the table," David Mckinnon, a former senior Canadian diplomat, told DW.

"And each in its own way assumed its 'special' relationship with the USA would be to their advantage in resolving this issue."

Reducing US dependence, diversifying ties

The troubled period between India and Canada was marked by disrupted visa services, consulate closures, stalled trade and investment, travel caution advisories and damaged trust.

"Obviously, the return of Donald Trump as US President and his increasingly destructive role in the world have completely changed that calculation in Ottawa and Delhi," said Mckinnon, pointing out that it was time for both countries to align on economic and security-related matters.

"For somewhat different reasons, both countries need to diversify away from reliance on the US. For both, though, this imperative is urgent and immediate," he added.

Ajay Bisaria, a former high commissioner to Canada, said the new envoys will develop a roadmap for stabilization, normalisation, and eventually elevation of the strained bilateral relationship.

"Cautious optimism permeates the air regarding the improvement of India-Canada diplomatic ties. Canada now appears to prioritise its national interests over diaspora politics in its foreign policy dealings, which may reduce the irritant factor," Bisaria, who co-chairs a Track II think tank initiative, told DW.

Nearly 8,00,000 Sikhs live in Canada, the largest community outside of Punjab, and the Sikh diaspora often stages activism and peaceful protests for Sikh causes.

"The political turbulence that was becoming an issue for Canadian investment in India has subsided," Bisaria added, pointing to how Canada continues to grapple with challenges from US volatility.

"In fact, Canadian institutional investment is projected to double from the current $100 billion (€85.9 billion) by 2030, as India emerges as a strategic diversification opportunity amidst the volatility in China and the US," said Bisaria.

Cautious diplomatic engineering

Moreover, Bisaria emphasised that the India-UK trade agreement, along with the potential India-US and India-EU deals, will provide a fresh template for the paused talks on an India-Canada interim trade agreement.

"Both sides may take stock of the upended trade order and the web of new bilateral deals they'll have in place this year. By next year, when the dust settles, they could resume conversations on the bilateral free trade agreement," he added.

Some experts believe the future of the India-Canada relationship will depend on whether they can discuss security concerns without them becoming burdensome to bilateral ties.

Shanthie Mariet D'Souza, president of Mantraya, an independent research forum, told DW that a reset in relations could not have happened without Canada agreeing to address some of India's concerns.

New Delhi has criticised Ottawa for being soft on supporters of the Khalistan movement, which is banned in India but has support among the Sikh diaspora, particularly in Canada.

"The new Canadian administration aims to improve its ties with India by moving past a difficult history that has negatively affected its reputation. It would have assured New Delhi that Canadian law would take a firm stance against trends that threaten India's security," said D'Souza.

She also believes that the Trump administration's unilateral tariff policy is playing a significant role in prompting India and Canada to seek partnerships and markets globally.

Both countries, she said, are focusing on restarting trade talks under the Early Progress Trade Agreement (EPTA), seen as a precursor toward the broader Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) with discussions covering areas like goods, services, clean energy, digital transformation, and supply chain resilience.

—DW NEWS

PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

Mamdani will be NYC's Mayor unless others quit: Don

WASHINGTON, 5 SEPT

US President Donald Trump predicted that Democrat Zohran Mamdani could become New York City's next mayor, provided two of the three other major candidates withdraw from the race. Trump did not specify which candidates he preferred to exit but stated, "I would like to see two people drop out and have it be one-on-one." Mamdani, having defeated former governor Andrew Cuomo in the Democratic primary, leads in polls despite Cuomo's independent candidacy and incumbent Mayor Eric Adams also on the ballot. Adams, facing pressure to resign, declared, "No pressure, no diamonds," while Republican Curtis Sliwa affirmed his commitment to stay in the race, advocating for voters to make the decision. *—PTI*

Joe Biden undergoes skin cancer surgery

WASHINGTON, 4 SEPT

Joe Biden recently underwent surgery to remove skin cancer lesions, according to a spokesperson. Kelly Scully confirmed Mohs surgery, a procedure that involves cutting away skin until no signs of cancer remain, after Inside Edition aired footage of the former US president with a fresh scar on his forehead following a church visit in Delaware. This marks Biden's latest health concern; previously, he had a basal cell carcinoma lesion removed from his chest two years ago. In March, his office announced a diagnosis of an aggressive form of prostate cancer that had spread to his bones. "Cancer touches us all," Biden shared on social media, adding, "Jill and I have learned that we are strongest in the broken places." *—PTI*

15 killed due to fresh Ebola outbreak in Congo

DAKAR, 5 SEPT

A fresh outbreak of Ebola in the Democratic Republic of Congo is suspected to have led to 15 deaths among 28 individuals exhibiting symptoms, according to the country's health ministry. This marks the 16th recorded outbreak of the virus in Congo. Health Minister Samuel-Roger Kamba reported a grim fatality rate of 53.6 per cent, highlighting the severity of the situation. The confirmed case involves a 34-year-old pregnant woman from Boulape in southern Kasai province. Symptoms in the suspected cases include fever, vomiting, diarrhoea, and severe bleeding. The World Health Organisation has deployed experts to enhance disease surveillance and is supplying vital resources. *—PTI*

China detains man for remarks on military parade

BEIJING, 5 SEPT

Chinese police have detained a 47-year-old man for allegedly making "inappropriate comments" on China's recent military parade and spreading rumours. According to the cyber police in Xiangyang city, the man, surnamed Meng, made slanderous and derogatory remarks on Wednesday while commenting on a social media post about the military parade in Beijing to mark the 80th anniversary of China's victory over Japan in World War II. When others expressed patriotic sentiment, Meng "insulted them and spread rumours, provoking strong anger among netizens", the police said in a statement on Thursday. Meng was detained in Zaoyang city for "picking quarrels and provoking trouble" - a catch-all criminal offence in China. Meng allegedly admitted to his "unlawful behaviour". *—PTI*

Trump hosts tech bros at White House

CEOs take turns lauding the Prez, say that Trump is making US tech more reliable

WASHINGTON, 5 SEPT

US President Donald Trump hosted a power-packed cohort of technology executives, including Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella and Google chief Sundar Pichai, at the White House, saying the "high IQ group" is leading a revolution in business.

"The most brilliant people are gathered around this table. This is definitely a high-IQ group and I'm very proud of them," Trump said, sitting at the centre of a long table and flanked by First Lady Melania Trump, Microsoft co-founder and billionaire philanthropist Bill Gates on one side and Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg on the other.

Pichai and Apple CEO Tim Cook sat across the table from Trump, while Nadella was seated toward one end of the table.

"It's an honour to be here with this group of people. They're leading a revolution in business and in genius and in every other work you can imagine," Trump said.

After making opening remarks, Trump invited the technology leaders sitting at the table to share their thoughts.

Pichai said called the 'AI Action Plan', unveiled in July by the White House, a "great start".

"I think that everything that you are doing in terms of setting in place the platform where the rest of the world can not only use our technology, but trust our technology more than any other alternative, is perhaps the most important issue, and you and your policies are really helping a lot," Nadella said in his remarks.

Other notable members included Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg, Google founder Sergey Brin, OpenAI CEO Sam Altman, and Oracle CEO Safra Catz, alongside a dozen other prominent players in the field.

One notable absentee was Tesla head Elon Musk, who served in the Trump administration before their public break. Musk said he was invited but not included in the guest list.

Trump also took turns asking the tech heads how much they invested in the country. *—PTI*

US President Donald Trump and First Lady Melania Trump hosted tech heads at the White House. Notable names included Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg, Microsoft co-founder Bill Gatesm Google founder Sergey Brin, Google CEO Sundar Pichai and Apple CEO Tim Cook PHOTO: PTI

Trump's 'Dept of Defence' is now 'Department of War'

WASHINGTON, 5 SEPT

US President Donald Trump plans to sign an executive order on Friday to rebrand the Department of Defence as the Department of War, his latest effort to project an image of toughness for America's military.

The Republican President can't formally change the name without legislation, which his administration would request from Congress.

In the meantime, Trump will authorise the Pentagon to use "secondary titles" so the department can go by its original name.

Pentagon chief Pete Hegseth posted "DEPARTMENT OF WAR" on social media after the executive order was initially reported by Fox News.

Trump and Hegseth have long talked about changing the name.

Hegseth has also hinted that his title as Defence Secretary may not be permanent.

In August, Trump told reporters that "everybody likes that we had an unbelievable history of victory when it was Department of War. Then we changed it to Department of Defence".

The Department of War was created in 1789, the same year that the US Constitution took effect. It was renamed by law in 1947, two years after the end of World War II. *—PTI*

Govt bins plans to make airlines pay for delays

The Trump administration on Thursday said it is abandoning a Biden-era plan that sought to require airlines to compensate stranded passengers with cash, lodging and meals for flight cancellations or changes caused by a carrier. The proposed rule sought compensation starting at USD 200 and went as high as USD 775.

US sanctions three Palestinian rights organisations

The US imposed sanctions on three organisations - Al Haq, Al Mezan Centre for Human Rights and the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights - that advocate for Palestinian rights because they allegedly engage in efforts by the International Criminal Court to investigate, arrest, detain or prosecute Israeli nationals without Israel's consent.

Now, Trump claims to have stopped three wars, not seven

In a significant shift from his usual narrative of having stopped "seven wars", Trump said he stopped "three wars". Trump did not specify which conflicts, but said that those were going on for over three decades. "I settled three wars. One was 31 years going, a lot of people killed, 10 million people. Another was 34, and another was 37 years," he said.

Central Americans 'acting' for China won't get US visas: Rubio

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio said that the US would restrict visas of Central American nationals who are "acting on behalf of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)" to carry out activities that undermine the rule of law in Central America. "These individuals and their immediate family members will be generally ineligible for entry into US," a statement said.

Russian President Vladimir Putin PHOTO: X

Foreign troops in Ukraine are targets, says Putin

KYIV, 5 SEPT

Russian President Vladimir Putin said Friday that any foreign troops deployed to Ukraine before a peace agreement has been signed would be considered "legitimate targets" by Moscow's forces.

"If any troops appear there, especially now while fighting is ongoing, we assume that they will be legitimate targets," he said during a panel at the Eastern Economic Forum in the Russian city of Vladivostok.

Putin also dismissed the idea of peacekeeping forces in Ukraine after a final peace deal, saying "no one should doubt" that Moscow would comply with a treaty to halt its 3½-year full-scale invasion of its neighbour.

He said that security guarantees would be needed for both Russia and Ukraine.

Putin's comments came hours after French President Emmanuel Macron said that 26 of Ukraine's allies have pledged to deploy troops as a "reassurance force" for Ukraine once fighting ends.

NORTH KOREA BRIDGE

A bridge connecting Russia and North Korea - known as the Friendship Bridge - is set to be unveiled next year, said Putin. Russia and China are also working to simplify the system of mutual payments and card payments amid sanctions, he said. Putin recently met the leaders of both the countries in China.—*Agencies*

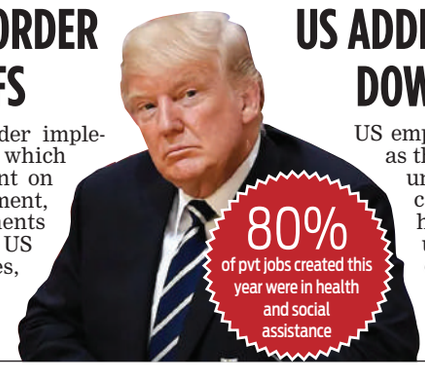
> **It will be almost impossible to make agreements with Ukraine on key issues: even if there is political will – although I doubt that – there still are legal and technical issues**
>
> —Vladimir Putin, Russian President

> **Europe needs a new network of modern defence production – countries supporting each other, producing protection not just for themselves but for all of Europe. This will make Europe stronger and more resilient**
>
> —Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Ukraine President

TRUMP SIGNS EXECUTIVE ORDER FOR 15% US-JAPAN TARIFFS

Trump officially signed an executive order implementing the US-Japan trade agreement, which establishes a baseline tariff of 15 per cent on nearly all imports from Japan. The agreement, announced in July, includes commitments from Japan to invest USD 550 billion in the US and various treatments for automobiles, aerospace products, and pharmaceuticals.

Japan's Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba described the move as a significant step.



US ADDED 22,000 JOBS IN AUG, DOWN FROM 80K IN JULY

US employers added just 22,000 jobs last month as the labour market continued to cool under uncertainty over Trump's economic policies. The Labour Department said that hiring decelerated from 79,000 in July. The unemployment rate ticked up to 4.3 per cent, also worse than expected and the highest level since 2021, the Labour Department said. Trump responded to July's report by firing the head.

UK DyPM Rayner resigns amid property tax fraud

LONDON, 5 SEPT

UK's Deputy Prime Minister, Angela Rayner, resigned on Friday after an independent inquiry found that she did not meet the ethical standards required for government ministers over a recent home purchase. On Wednesday, Rayner admitted that she did not pay enough tax on her purchase of an apartment in Hove, on England's south coast. Rayner then referred herself to the independent adviser on ministerial standards, Laurie Magnus, who delivered his report to Prime Minister Keir Starmer. Reports have suggested that Rayner saved 40,000 pounds by not paying the appropriate levy, known as a stamp duty. *—PTI*

Xi, Kim pledge deeper ties in Beijing

BEIJING, 5 SEPT

Chinese President Xi Jinping and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un pledged mutual support and enhanced cooperation during talks in Beijing after a commemoration of the end of World War II, the countries' state media said.

Xi and Kim, along with top officials from their countries, met at Beijing's Great Hall of the People, a day after Kim attended a Chinese military parade alongside other foreign leaders, including Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Xi highlighted the "traditional friendship" between China and North Korea and pledged to consolidate and boost relations, according to a readout of their statements published by Chinese state broadcaster CCTV on Thursday.

"This position will not change regardless of how the international situation evolves," Xi said.

North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency said on Friday that the leaders discussed increasing high-level visits and contacts as well as strengthening strategic cooperation and protecting shared interests in international and regional affairs.

Kim left Beijing by his private train. *—PTI*

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un met Chinese President Xi Jinping during a rare foreign visit to Beijing PHOTO: PTI

Israel bombs high-rise buildings killing 44 in Gaza

JERUSALEM, 5 SEPT

Israeli forces have killed at least 44 people including 7 children across Gaza on Friday, reports said.

Israel's Defence Minister announced that the "gates of hell" are opening in Gaza, as the military destroyed a high-rise tower in a densely populated part of Gaza City.

Military analyst Elijah Magnier told Al Jazeera that Israel was targeting high-rise buildings in Gaza to minimise its potential troop casualties, while also spreading "panic and fear" among the civilian population.

Meanwhile, The **Global Sumud Flotilla** (in pic) is continuing on its way to Gaza, trying to break the Israeli blockade on Gaza, where a famine has been declared. Climate activist and Sumud volunteer Greta Thunberg has responded to Israel's threats against the flotilla. Taking to social media, she said "Israeli officials use genocidal political propaganda in desperate attempts to try to silence and scare us as well as further dehumanise Palestinians".

Nelson Mandela's grandson, Mandla Mandela, is joining the flotilla in Tunisia.

Hundreds from 44 countries are sailing dozens of vessels with aid for Gaza in the largest flotilla yet to break Israel's siege. Their goal is to deliver humanitarian aid, which is the flotilla's only cargo, and open a humanitarian corridor for Palestinians. *—Agencies*

A NEW ERA

Thailand elects new PM; Ex-PM Thaksin flees fearing arrest

Anutin Charnvirakul PHOTO: X

BANGKOK, 5 SEPT

- Anutin Charnvirakuls is best known for successfully lobbying for the decriminalisation of cannabis, a policy now more strictly regulated for medical purposes

Veteran Thai politician Anutin Charnvirakul won a vote in Parliament on Friday to become the country's next Prime Minister.

Anutin, leader of the Bhumjaithai party, won more than 247 votes — the required majority — from the House of Representative's 492 active members. His total must be certified after voting is completed. He and his government are expected to take office in a few days after obtaining a formal appointment from King Maha Vajiralongkorn.

Anutin succeeds Paetongtarn Shinawatra, who was dismissed by court order as prime minister last week after being found guilty of ethics violations over a politically compromising phone call with neighbouring Cambodia's Senate President Hun Sen.

This comes as Paetongtarn's father, Thaksin Shinawatra and also a former prime minister, left the country just five days before a court ruling that could open him up to a new prison sentence.

Thaksin told Thai immigration authorities at Bangkok's Don Mueang Airport that his private jet was headed for Singapore. Police said he was allowed to take off shortly after 7pm because he had no arrest warrant or court order preventing him from leaving the country.

However, flight-tracking data showed the private jet initially flew south toward Singapore before suddenly turning west, doing two circles and continuing towards India. It is likely that he fled to Dubai. Thaksin was prime minister from 2001 until a military coup ousted him in 2006 while he was abroad. He had been ousted amid accusations of corruption, abuse of power, and disrespect for Thailand's monarchy. *—PTI*

Thaksin Shinawatra PHOTO: X

Govt to lose ₹3.7K cr due to GST cut: SBI

Govt estimates the net fiscal impact of GST rates cut will be Rs 48,000 crore annually

KOLKATA, 5 SEPT

The State Bank of India (SBI) in its latest research report said that reforms in GST through reduction in rates will cause a minimal revenue loss of Rs 3,700 crore.

The government estimates the net fiscal impact of GST rates rationalisation will be Rs 48,000 crore on an annualised basis.

According to the report, given the growth and consumption boost, the minimal revenue loss is estimated at Rs 3,700 crore and will have no impact on the fiscal deficit.

At the 56th meeting of GST Council held few days ago, the current four-tier structure has been replaced with a two-tier one, with a standard rate of 18 per cent and five per cent, and de-merit rate of 40 per cent on selected few goods and services.

The report said that the GST rate rationalisation will largely have a positive impact on the banking sector due to meaningful cost efficiencies.

GST rate rationalisation has also brought down the effective weighted average rate from 14.4 per cent at the time of inception in 2017, which is expected to come down to 9.5 per cent, the report said.

When GST was introduced, the four rates were five per cent, 12 per cent, 18 per cent and 28 per cent.

Since the GST rate rationalisation of essential items (around 295) has declined from 12 per cent to five per cent or zero, the CPI inflation in the category may also come down by 25 basis points to 30 basis points in the current financial year, the report said.

Overall, the CPI inflation may be moderated in the range of 65 basis points to 75 basis points over 2026-27, according to the report. *—PTI*

- GST rate rationalisation has also brought down the effective weighted average rate from 14.4 per cent at the time of inception in 2017

PHOTO: FREEPIK

We have received assurance from all sectors of industry, different levels, big and small, have committed that we will pass on the entire benefit to the common man. We are very confident that they will meet our expectations... We have a large section of people who need to receive goods at a very low price. So we have kept the 5% GST rate, and all the goods of the common man are at 5%

- Piyush Goyal, Union Minister of Commerce and Industry

GST 2.0 to help tariff affected sectors: Industry

NEW DELHI, 5 SEPT

Industry bodies and experts have welcomed the government's announcement of GST 2.0, calling it a move that will simplify the tax system and reduce the burden on consumers, ultimately giving a push to the economy.

Speaking to ANI, representatives from various sectors affected by the recently imposed higher tariffs from the US said the reforms will create more opportunities and give a boost to the industry.

The textile sector sees relief. Mithileshwar Thakur, Secretary General of the Apparel Export Promotion Council (AEPC), said, "The series of GST reforms are bold, brave and pathbreaking... This is a welcome move and will boost demand, drive consumption, and kickstart the economy by eliminating some slab rates and addressing long-standing GST issues."

All India Gem & Jewellery Domestic Council's (GJC) Chairman Rajesh Rokde said, "There is a new reform to add alphanumeric digits in the silver hallmarking that has been implemented from 1 September by the govt of India, but is voluntary... We thank the Commerce Ministry and Union Minister Pralhad Joshi for facilitating better transparency."

Rajesh Menon, Director General of the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM), said the decision to lower taxes on entry-level vehicles would directly benefit buyers. *—ANI*

Rupee hits fresh low at 88.09 against USD

MUMBAI, 5 SEPT

The rupee touched its lowest level but pared all losses before ending 3 paise higher at Rs 88.09 against the US dollar on Friday amid sustained outflow of foreign funds and renewed concern over additional US tariffs on Indian IT sector exports. At the inter-bank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 88.11 against USD and touched the lowest-ever intra-day level of 88.38 before ending the session at 88.09 against the greenback, up 3 paise from its previous close. Local unit had lost 10 paise to close at 88.12 against USD on Thursday. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Gold jumps by Rs 900 to Rs 1,06,970/10g

NEW DELHI, 5 SEPT

Gold prices jumped by Rs 900 to Rs 1,06,970 per 10g in the national capital on Friday, inching closer to record high levels on fresh buying by stockists and firm global trends. According to the All India Sarafa Association, gold of 99.5 per cent purity also advanced by Rs 900 to Rs 1,06,100 per 10g (inclusive of all taxes) on Friday, from the previous close of Rs 1,05,200 per 10g. Silver prices remained flat at Rs 1,25,600 per kg (inclusive of all taxes) on Friday, as per the Association. Spot gold edged higher to USD 3,551.44 per ounce, remaining close to its record high of USD 3,578.80 per ounce on Wednesday. Spot silver rose by 0.22 per cent to trade at USD 40.76 per ounce. *—PTI*

Nothing to open first store, CMF HQ in India

NEW DELHI, 5 SEPT

Nothing Co-Founder Akis Evangelidis announced on Friday the London-based consumer tech company will open its first flagship store in India this year, while its sub-brand CMF is setting up its global headquarters in the country. He also revealed that Nothing's smartphone, Phone (3), is being manufactured in India and is now also being exported. "This is not just about making in India, but about building from India to the world. With CMF, we are also in the process of establishing our global headquarters here, strengthening our leadership team with local talent, and anchoring our operations in the place where we see the strongest momentum. CMF is a design-focused technology launched in 2023. Nothing recently moved CMF's Global Marketing function to India, as part of its vision to build CMF into a global brand from India. *—PTI*

Tata's IHCL reports malware attack on IT systems

NEW DELHI, 5 SEPT

The Indian Hotels Company Limited (IHCL), the country's leading hospitality player and part of the Tata Group, has reported a malware incident affecting select IT systems. In a recent regulatory filing, the company stated, "Immediate action has been taken to contain the impact and secure the systems. The relevant authorities have been duly notified." IHCL reassured stakeholders that it is "closely monitoring the situation while operating business as usual." Additionally, Benares Hotels, a subsidiary of IHCL, confirmed similar updates regarding the IT security incident in their own regulatory filing. Established in 1971, Benares Hotels operates notable properties including Taj Ganges and Nadesar Palace in Varanasi, and Ginger Hotel in Gondia, Maharashtra. *—PTI*

Markets remain unchanged

MUMBAI, 5 SEPT

Benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty closed unchanged after a volatile session on Friday as gains in oil & gas and auto shares were offset by losses in IT and FMCG shares.

After a volatile trade, the 30-share BSE Sensex closed lower by 7.25 points or 0.01 per cent at 80,710.76 with 14 of its components ending with gains and 16 with losses.

In a see-saw trade, the barometer opened higher but slipped into the red in late morning deals. It hit a low of 80,321.19 in the afternoon session before paring losses in the pre-close session. The index gyrated 715.37 points between the day's high and low.

The 50-share NSE Nifty eked out gains of 6.70 points or 0.03 per cent to close at 24,741.

Among Sensex firms, Mahindra & Mahindra climbed 2.34 per cent, followed by Maruti which climbed 1.70 per cent. Power Grid, Reliance Industries, Bharti Airtel and Eternal also were also among the gainers.

However, ITC, HCL Tech, Tata Consultancy Services, Tech Mahindra and Infosys were among the laggards.

BSE smallcap gauge went up by 0.09 per cent, while midcap index dipped 0.10 per cent.

Among BSE sectoral indices, auto jumped 1.30 per cent and telecommunication climbed 0.96 per cent. Metal (0.71 per cent), consumer discretionary (0.60 per cent) and energy (0.20 per cent) also advanced.

"Sector-wise, auto stocks outperformed, rising over 1 per cent on optimism following reduced GST rates for vehicles," Ajit Mishra – SVP, Research, Religare Broking Ltd, said. *—PTI*

Bank of Baroda classifies Anil, RCom as fraud

NEW DELHI, 5 SEPT

After State Bank of India and Bank of India, another lender Bank of Baroda has classified the loan account of insolvent Reliance Communications (Rcom) as fraudulent and named its former director, tycoon **Anil Ambani**, citing alleged misutilisation of loans granted more than a decade back, according to a regulatory filing.

RCom said it has received a letter from BoB dated 2 September, conveying its decision to classify the loan account of the company and promoter Anil Ambani as "fraud". Bank of Baroda had sanctioned Rs 1,600 crore and another Rs 862.50 crore in line of credit to the company. Of the total Rs 2,462.50 crore, Rs 1,656.07 crore remains outstanding as on 28 August, according to the lenders' letter disclosed by RCom in the regulatory filing.

"The account was classified as non-performing asset (NPA) with effect from 5 June, 2017," the letter said.

While RCom is undergoing corporate insolvency resolution proceedings to find a suitor to take over the company and clear its liabilities, BoB in the letter said currently there is no active resolution plan that is approved by the NCLT.

No impact on RPower biz

Reliance Power said that action taken by Bank of Baroda against Rcom has no impact on its business operations and financial performance.

In an exchange filing, Reliance Power said it is a separate and independent listed entity, with no business or financial linkage to Reliance Communications.

Ambani has not been on the board of Reliance Power for more than 3.5 years. *—PTI*

TESLA'S 1ST OWNER IN INDIA

Maharashtra Transport Minister Pratap Sarnaik on Friday became the first person to buy a Tesla car in India from its first showroom in Mumbai. He said he bought Model Y to raise awareness on electric vehicle adoption. Tesla released two Model Y variants in India, the price of which ranges from 60 lakh for Rear-Wheel Drive (RWD) to 68 lakh for Long Range RWD

PHOTO: X/ @PratapSarnaik

CYBERATTACK: JAGUAR WORKERS TO STAY AT HOME

HALEWOOD/ SOLIHULL, 5 SEPT

Employees of luxury and sports car producer Jaguar Land Rover's (JLR) were sent emails on Monday asking them to stay at home after the company faced a cyberattack on its two main manufacturing plants on Sunday, sources said.

The Halewood and Solihull plants in UK had to halt production due to the attack, it said.

According to sources, JLR's production was disrupted, while the retail business was badly hit at a peak time when many customers came to purchase new vehicles.

Sources said that the attack was detected midway, resulting in the company shutting down the IT systems for minimal impact, adding that the hackers were trying to extort money.

The company took immediate action against the attack, hoping for a minimal impact and a quick restart of operations, sources said, adding that evidence indicates no customer data was stolen.

As of now, the hackers have not been identified, sources said. *—Agencies*

Adani Power 1:5 stock split approved

NEW DELHI, 5 SEPT

Adani Power on Friday said it has received shareholders' approval for a stock split in the ratio of 1:5 through a postal ballot notice issued on 1 August, 2025.

The resolution has been considered as duly passed with the requisite majority, as mentioned in the postal ballot notice dated 1 August, a regulatory filing stated.

According to the notice, each equity share of Rs 10 will be sub-divided into five fully paid-up equity shares of the face value of Rs 2 each, ranking pari passu in all respects. The voting period began from 9am on 6 August, and ended at 5pm on 4 September.

The company explained that the board, at its meeting, approved and recommended the share split to facilitate greater participationfrom retail and small investors.

There will not be any change in the amount of authorised, issued, subscribed and paid-up share capital of the company on account of sub-division/split of the equity shares, it had stated.

The record date for the sub-division of equity shares shall be fixed by the board (or by any duly constituted committee thereof) after the approval of the members is obtained.

The notice showed that post-stock split, number of equity shares will increase from 2,480 crore to 12,400 crore.

Adani Power was incorporated in 1996 and in 2009 got listed on the bourses. *—PTI*

COMPLIANT WITH SANCTIONS

Russian oil adds 2.1% to Reliance EBITDA

NEW DELHI, 5 SEPT

Reliance Industries Ltd has consistently remained compliant with international sanctions and is expected to adhere to upcoming measures on Russian oil, analysts said, estimating that oil sourced from Russia contributes just 2.1 per cent to its consolidated EBITDA.

Reliance operates the world's largest single location refining complex, with more than half of the capacity exclusively dedicated for exports. It is also India's biggest user of Russian oil.

In July, the EU approved its 18th sanctions package in response to Russia's ongoing war in Ukraine. It lowered oil price cap to USD 47.60 per barrel from USD 60, for cargo to avail western shipping and insurance services, as well as banned import of refined petroleum products derived from Russian oil, including those refined in third countries, from January 2026.

Reliance's Jamnagar refinery complex, which includes a 35.2 million tonnes a year unit dedicated only for exports, sells fuels like diesel to EU and other nations.

Stating that Reliance has been compliant with western sanctions, Jefferies in a note said the company "has adhered to western sanctions on Iranian and Venezuelan crude and is likely to comply in the event of sanctions on Russian crude, in our view."

Like other Indian refiners, Reliance increased purchase of Russian oil post Ukraine war in February 2022. *—PTI*

- Reliance operates the world's largest single location refining complex, with more than half of the capacity dedicated for exports

Gameskraft profit falls, files plaint against ex-CFO

NEW DELHI, 5 SEPT

Online gaming firm Gameskraft Technologies Ltd has filed a police complaint against its former CFO for allegedly siphoning off over Rs 231 crore -- whose write-off led to a decline in the company's FY25 net profit.

The Bengaluru-based firm on Friday reported a net profit of Rs 706 crore on a revenue of Rs 4,009 crore in the fiscal year 2024-25. This compared with Rs 947 crore net profit on a revenue of Rs 3,475 crore in the previous year.

The company said FY25 was the first full year of 28 per cent GST tax on its operations.

The previous year earning was factoring in a six-month impact of the newly introduced GST regime for the online gaming sector.

While the company did not elaborate on the nature of unsanctioned transactions, sources with knowledge of the matter said the write-off pertained to discovery of money allegedly siphoned off by the firm's former CFO. *—PTI*

CCI rejects complaint against Emaar over Marbella project

NEW DELHI, 5 SEPT

India's fair-trade regulator has thrown out a complaint accusing Emaar India Ltd and others of abusing dominance and engaging in anti-competitive conduct over its "Marbella" villa project in Gurugram. In an order, the Competition Commission of India (CCI) said no prima facie case of contravention of Sections 3 and 4 of the Competition Act – which relate to anti-competitive agreements and abuse of dominant position – had been established.

The informant alleged that Emaar India, its community-management arm and various government departments breached commitments by allowing construction of builder floors and non-villa units on 97 vacant plots within Zones 1 and 6 of the project. Originally marketed as an exclusive "Signature Villa Community", the changes were said to undermine the uniform design and exclusivity promised to villa buyers, imposing unfair conditions and amounting to abuse of dominance.

However, the CCI noted that other major developers such as DLF, Godrej, Tata Housing, Signature Global and Vatika Group also operate in Gurugram's villa segment. It found Emaar not dominant in the relevant market, so the abuse-of-dominance charge could not be sustained. *—PTI*

India thrash Thailand 11-0 in women's Asia Cup hockey

INDIAN WOMEN'S HOCKEY TEAM IN ACTION PHOTO: PTI

HANGZHOU, 5 SEPT

Udita Duhan and Beauty Dung Dung scored a brace each as India began their campaign in the women's Asia Cup hockey tournament with an 11-0 thrashing of Thailand here on Friday.

Udita scored in the 30th and 52nd minutes from penalty corners, while Dung Dung struck in the 45th and 54th minutes.

India's other goal-scorers were Mumtaz Khan (7th minute), Sangita Kumari (10th), Navneet Kaur (16th), Lalremsiami (18th), Thoudam Suman Devi (49th), Sharmila Devi (57th), and Rutaja Dadaso Pisal (60th). India, currently ranked ninth in the world, led 5-0 at halftime in the Pool B match against the 30th-ranked Thais.

The tournament features eight teams, and the top two from each of the two pools will qualify for the Super 4s stage. The top two teams in Super 4s will play in the final scheduled for 14 September.

India has come into the tournament without the injured duo of veteran goalkeeper Savita Punia and ace drag-flicker Deepika.

The Asia Cup winners will qualify for the 2026 Women's World Cup to be held in Belgium and the Netherlands.

After Thailand, India will take on Japan on Saturday, followed by the final pool match against Singapore on 8 September.

—PTI

India eye final spot as they take on China

Super 4 stage: India is one step away from the final

RAJGIR, 5 SEPT

One step away from the final, the Indian men's hockey team will look to reach its optimal level of efficiency, when the Harmanpreet Singh-led side takes on tricky China in its last Super 4 stage match of the Asia Cup here on Saturday.

After the disappointing 2-2 draw against five-time champions South Korea, India bounced back strongly to outplay Malaysia 4-1 in their second Super 4 match, and the latest result will give the home team a lot of confidence heading into the contest against China.

The convincing win enabled India to jump to the top of the standings with four points from two matches, while both China and Malaysia have three points each. Korea is languishing at the bottom with just one point.

The top two teams from the Super 4s will progress to the summit clash, and a draw would be enough for India to seal their place in Sunday's final.

After a subdued outing against Korea, the Indians played with more intent and tenacity against Malaysia, although the start was far from rosy. The Indians were slow off the blocks and conceded an early goal before getting their act together to stage a remarkable comeback by excelling in all departments of the game.

India's Vivek Sagar Prasad celebrates after scoring a goal PHOTO: PTI

Speaking after the win against Malaysia, chief coach Craig Fulton said the squad is "still not there" as far as reaching peak performance was concerned, and the Indian players know that the expectations from them are high.

The question is how they live up to the expectations. The answer is simple: just raise their game a few notches by doing the small details correctly.

So far in the tournament, the midfield has been marshalled pretty well by the likes of veteran Manpreet Singh, Hardik Singh, Vivek Sagar Prasad, and Rajinder Singh. Their coordination with the forward line was a treat to watch against Malaysia.

Hardik, in particular, has been a livewire in the midfield with his fast dribbling skills and solo runs. *—PTI*

WORLD ARCHERY CHAMPIONSHIPS

Deepika, Jyothi to lead India's charge in Korea

GWANGJU, 5 SEPT

DEEPIKA KUMARI PHOTO: PTI

JYOTHI SUREKHA PHOTO: PTI

In the twilight of her career, seasoned Deepika Kumari will yet again chase an elusive World Championship medal as India is set to showcase their next generation, led by 15-year-old Gatha Khadake, at the prestigious tournament beginning here Saturday.

Pune's Gatha has been the breakout star of Indian archery this year after shining in the national trials in June with a record 686 points the highest recurve qualification score across genders and sealed her place in the senior team.

Gatha and 16-year-old Sharvari Shende, who recently became the U-18 world champion, had impressed at the trials, but only the top three earned berths for Gwangju.

Deepika, who topped the trials, was joined by Ankita and Gatha to form India's three-member recurve women's squad.

Her last-16 finish was the best among Indian women in that event, even ahead of Deepika and Ankita.

The likes of Prathamesh Fuge, Aman Saini, and Rishabh Yadav will lead the charge in the men's section, while the experienced Jyothi Surekha Vennam, still chasing a world gold, anchors the women's team in her seventh appearance.Vennam has three world medals silver (Yankton 2021) and bronze (Den Bosch 2019, Berlin 2023). She will be joined by Parneet Kaur and youngster Prithika Pradeep.Indian team-Recurve men: Dhiraj Bommadevara, Neeraj Chauhan, RahulRecurve women: Deepika Kumari, Ankita Bhakat, Gatha KhadakeCompound men: Prathamesh Fuge, Aman Saini, Rishabh YadavCompound women: Parneet Kaur, Prithika Pradeep, Jyothi Surekha Vennam. *—PTI*

Defender Sandesh Jhingan undergoes surgery

PHOTO: PTI

NEW DELHI, 5 SEPT

Star India defender Sandesh Jhingan has successfully undergone surgery for a cheekbone fracture, which he sustained while playing in the CAFA Nations Cup in Tajikistan, his Indian Super League side FC Goa said on Friday. Jhingan suffered the injury during India's group match against Iran on September 1 in Hisor, Tajikistan. India lost that match 0-3, and Jhingan returned home on Wednesday. "Yes, his surgery happened on Thursday," FC Goa CEO Ravi Puskur told PTI. The surgery has rendered the 32-year-old stalwart doubtful for India's two crucial AFC Asian Cup qualifying round matches next month on 9 October in Singapore and on 14 October in Margao.*—PTI*

BCCI raises Indian team's jersey sponsorship rates

NEW DELHI, 5 SEPT

Sponsoring the Indian cricket team is set to get costlier with the BCCI raising the amount to Rs 3.5 crore per match for a bilateral series and Rs 1.5 crore for a game in a multilateral event. According to a report in Cricbuzz, these figures will apply in competitions sanctioned and organised by the ICC and Asian Cricket Council (ACC). Citing industry sources, the report added that these figures are slightly higher than the current rates of Rs 3.17 crore for bilateral games and Rs 1.12 crore for multilateral matches. The development comes in the wake of Dream11's exit as jersey sponsor, which was triggered by the government's Online Gaming Act, 2025. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Ross Taylor to come out of retirement to play

WELLINGTON, 5 SEPT

New Zealand cricket great Ross Taylor will come out of retirement to play for Samoa at the Twenty20 World Cup qualifying tournament in Oman next month said on Friday. Taylor retired from international cricket in 2022 after playing more matches for New Zealand than any other player: 112 tests, 236 one-day internationals, and 102 T20 internationals. He remains second behind Kane Williamson on New Zealand's all-time test scoring list with 7,683 runs and second, also behind Williamson, with 19 test centuries. *—PTI*

South Africa clinches ODI series against England

LONDON, 5 SEPT

South Africa clinched the ODI series against England with a game to spare after a five-run win in the second match that was set up by a record-breaking 85 by Matt Breetzke at Lord's. Brought in to the Proteas lineup to replace the ill Wiaan Mulder, Breetzke became the first player in ODI history to score at least a half-century in his first five matches, according to the ESPNcricinfo website. The 26-year-old middle-order batter's 77-ball knock added to a 49 from opener Aiden Markram and 58 from Tristan Stubbs as South Africa, which was put into bat, made 330-8 from its 50 overs on Thursday. "It was a more than competitive score. I definitely would have taken that when we were three wickets down," Proteas captain Temba Bavuma said. *—PTI*

Malewar, Shubham make 50s as CZ reply to WZ

BENGALURU, 5 SEPT

Central Zone top-order batters, led by Danish Malewar, carried the team to 229 for two, giving a solid reply to West Zone on the second day of the Duleep Trophy semifinal here on Friday.

Shubham Sharma (60) and skipper Rajat Patidar (47) were batting at stumps after Central bagged four quick wickets to end West's first innings at 438. Central needs a further 209 runs to take an innings lead.

Malewar, who made a double hundred in the quarterfinal against North-East Zone, took his time to settle down before making 76, as his opening partner Ayush Pandey (40 off 59 balls) went off the blocks briskly.

There was some help for the spinners as West Zone skipper Shardul Thakur often employed a slip and short leg fielder around an hour into the second session.

Malewar, who completed his fifty in 94 balls, looked good to carry on for more, but a rather loose drive outside the off-stump off Jadeja resulted in a caught behind catch to Harvik Desai.

However, Shubham found another able ally in skipper Patidar, making 69 runs for the ongoing third wicket alliance, to keep Central close on the heels of West Zone. *—PTI*

Amanda defeats Naomi Osaka to reach her 2nd Grand Slam final

NEW YORK, 5 SEPT

Amanda Anisimova eliminated four-time Grand Slam champion Naomi Osaka 6-7 (4), 7-6 (3), 6-3 in a U.S. Open semifinal that ended at nearly 1 a.m. Friday featured two of the most powerful first-strike hitters in women's tennis.

The No. 8-seeded Anisimova, a 24-year-old who was born in New Jersey and grew up in Florida, reached her second straight major final by coming through after 2 hours, 56 minutes.

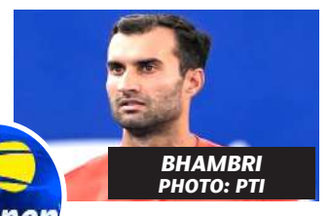
"I wasn't sure I would make it past the finish line, and I tried to dig deep," said Anisimova, who needed three match points to get the job done. "It was a huge fight out there today."

ANISIMOVA PHOTO: PTI

When it was over, Anisimova yelled, "Let's go!" and enjoyed the moment by kneeling on the court and leaning forward.

This is the fifth consecutive women's final at a Slam involving an American woman.

Bhambri bows out of US Open after reaching semi-finals


BHAMBRI PHOTO: PTI

India's Yuki Bhambri ended a semifinalist at the US Open men's doubles event with partner Michael Venus, marking his deepest run at a Grand Slam tournament.

Bhambri went down 7-6 (2) 6-7(5) 4-6 in a thrilling contest against the experienced sixth-seed British pair of Neal Skupski and Joe Salisbury, but not before scripting history of his own.

The 33-year-old Delhi player became only the fourth Indian man in the Open era to reach a Grand Slam doubles semifinal, after Leander Paes, Mahesh Bhupathi, and Rohan Bopanna. *—PTI*

Steiner to take over KTM Tech3 MotoGP team

DUBAI, 5 SEPT

A consortium led by the former Haas F1 team principal Guenther Steiner will acquire full ownership of the Red Bull KTM Tech3 MotoGP team, with the new structure to take full effect in 2026, the team announced on Friday. Steiner will assume the role of CEO while project partner Richard Coleman will become the team principal of one of the MotoGP paddock's longest-serving teams. The acquisition will be funded by a group of investors led by IKON Capital.Founder and current team principal Herve Poncharal will continue to lead the team through the 2025 campaign before he transitions to a consultant role."I want to thank Herve for the trust in giving his baby to us. I'm in motorsport for a long time, it's my first time with two wheels and not four wheels,Steiner told reporters. *—PTI*

Sumit, Neeraj make winning start

WORLD BOXING CHAMPIONSHIPS

LIVERPOOL, 5 SEPT

Indian boxer Sumit Kundu produced a commanding performance to advance to the round of 16 at the World Boxing Championships with a unanimous decision win over Jordan's Mohammad Al Hussein in the men's middleweight category here on Friday.One of the most promising pugilists in the country, Sumit seized control from the opening bell as he immediately claimed the centre of the ring and forced Al Hussein on the defensive. Both boxers traded clean punches, but Sumit was relentless and his heavier shots and precise backhand repeatedly pierced the Jordanian's guard.By the end of the second round, the Indian had built a commanding lead, and though he eased off in the final minutes of the bout, the verdict was never in doubt. The Army man will now face a stiff challenge in the round of 16 against reigning European champion and Rami Kiwan of Bulgaria, who received a first-round bye. *—PTI*

WOMEN'S SOCCER: ALYSSA JOINS CHELSEA

LONDON, 5 SEPT

Chelsea completed the signing of Alyssa Thompson from Angel City on Friday in the latest big-money move in women's soccer.

The U.S. international signed for a reported fee of around 1 million pounds ($1.35 million) on a five-year contract.

"Chelsea is such an amazing club, one of the best in the world. Being able to play with players that are the best in the world is an amazing opportunity at such a young age, and I want to learn, grow, and develop a lot," said the 20-year-old forward. *—PTI*

Osorio leads El Salvador to victory over Guatemala

GUATEMALA CITY, 5 SEPT

Harold Osorio scored late to give El Salvador a 1-0 away win over Guatemala in the first match of the final round of Central America World Cup qualifiers.

Osorio's 79th-minute goal on Thursday was just enough for the Salvadorians, who are trying to advance to their first World Cup since Spain in 1982.

HAROLD OSORIO PHOTO: X/@SALVADOR

El Salvador leads Group A with three points, two clear of Panama and Suriname.

El Salvador will be aiming for back-to-back wins when it hosts Suriname next Monday, while Guatemala visits Panama. Twelve teams, divided into three groups, are vying for three direct spots from regional qualifying for next year's World Cup. The United States, Canada, and Mexico have qualified automatically as World Cup co-hosts. In the earlier CONCACAF World Cup Group A qualifying game, Panama salvaged a scoreless draw against Suriname. *—PTI*

EMOTIONAL FAREWELL

Lionel Messi scores twice for Argentina

BUENOS AIRES, 5 SEPT

Lionel Messi made sure he had good memories of playing a home qualifier with Argentina's national team for the last time in his illustrious career.

Messi scored twice Thursday in Argentina's 3-0 victory over Venezuela in front of a raucous sellout crowd that had gathered at Estadio Monumental to bid him farewell.

"Being able to finish this way here is what I've always dreamed of," Messi said.

"I've experienced a lot of things on this pitch, both good and not so good, but it's always a joy to play in Argentina, in front of our fans."

Messi is yet to give any clues about when he will retire from the top level of the sport. But the qualifiers for the 2030 World Cup will begin in 2027, when he's 40.

The Argentina captain scored in the 39th and 80th minutes, and Lautaro Martinez added a goal in the 76th.

Messi now has 36 goals in South American World Cup qualifiers and remains the all-time scoring leader. His Inter Miami teammate, Luis Suarez, has 29 goals in continental qualifying, but he has retired from Uruguay's national team.

LIONEL MESSI PHOTO: X/@MESSI

Bolivia's Marcelo Moreno Martins is third with 22.

Looking ahead, Messi clarified that he will only compete in next year's World Cup if he feels physically fit.

"I'm excited, eager. It's day by day, feeling the sensations. If I feel good, I enjoy it; if not, I'd rather not be there," he said, adding that the nine months until the tournament kicks off "is a long time."

Already qualified, the World Cup champions extended their tally to 38 points and will remain atop the South American qualifying standings regardless of what happens in the last round next Tuesday. *—PTI*